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"Kid's talk" : a case study using audience through radio as a motivational factor in an elementary school classroom.

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"KID'S TALK": A CASE STUDY USING AUDIENCE THROUGH RADIO AS A MOTIVATIONAL FACTOR IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM

A Dissertation Presented

by

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TO JOSEPH JOHN AND JUDE JOSEPH

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ABSTRACT

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IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM

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This case study describes how the language arts learning process of one fourth grade class in a public elementary school was influenced by having an audience for their school work. Students were involved in collaborative writing, reading, and peer review. Their work was audiotaped and resulted in a radio program, "Kid's Talk", which was aired on a local AM radio station.

An existing body of research literature examines numerous radio programs that are available for children. However, there is relatively little work that has been done involving children creating their own radio programs, the processes involved, and the motivational aspects of such work. This study adds to the body of research regarding these factors.

This dissertation draws on qualitative research techniques. It utilizes interviewing, student journals, and both parent and student questionnaires, offering several different perspectives of how the participants were affected by their awareness of an audience. Issues addressed include students' reactions to having an audience for their work; the classroom teacher's description of day-to-day experiences

while creating the programs with the students; and also the parents' reactions as they witnessed the process through observations of their children. Finally, this work looks at educational benefits derived by the students from working together on a project that involved each member of the class.

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CHAPTER I

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND BACKGROUND

Focus of the Study

Through the audiotaping of individual and group work this study will examine the use of "audience" as a factor in an elementary school classroom. Specifically this study will describe the students' writing, then audiotaping original and group class work that is subsequently broadcast on a local radio station.

Statement of the Problem

Current research reveals concern over the lack of student motivation to stay in school and to achieve academically (Covington 1992, Jacobs 1991). Motivating students can be seen as both a problem and a challenge for teachers in today's classrooms. Much research focuses on the environment where the majority of learning takes place, in the classroom, and where "students are most likely to acquire a strong motivation to gain new knowledge" (Ames 1987, Brophy 1987, Grossnickle 1989, Wlodkowski and Jaynes 1990). Motivation to learn in and of itself can be nurtured on a broader level in the classroom and school, in the home, and within the community (Graves 1983, Renchler 1992, Fullan 1991, Sexton 1993, Thompson 1993).

Several factors play a role in student motivation to learn. There are those who believe in a self-worth theory of achievement motivation which depends on a student's ability to achieve competitively (Covington 1992). Rewards also play an important role in motivating students to learn. Rewards in the form of public recognition of a student's work by

peers, teachers, family and community can be a factor in motivating by giving students a purpose for writing outside of a grade received in the classroom (Bunce-Crim 1992, Dale 1972, Fullan 1991, Good, Brophy 1984, Graves, 1983).

The work of Beane (1991), Shoemaker (1989) and Renchler (1992) emphasizes the importance of how students view themselves in the larger society outside of the classroom as an influencing factor in motivation to learn. Schools cannot be expected to change poor environmental influences outside of the classroom which diminish student self-worth and motivation to learn. It may be possible, however, in areas of curriculum, for schools to emphasize community awareness so that students view themselves as active participants promoting self-worth and motivation to achieve.

The problem this study aims to address is how schools can enhance the school atmosphere in order to motivate students.

Questions this study will address are:

1. How does having an audience for individual and group school work affect these elementary school students?

2. What are students' and families personal reactions to the audiotaping and public airing of their class work?

3. Do students' opinions of themselves as readers and writers change at all after they have read to and written for an audience?

4. What are the possible educational benefits to students of differing backgrounds and abilities of having an audience for their individual and group school work?

5. What are students' interest in and knowledge of radio?

The process of the study will be three-fold. One classroom of fourth grade students will, both individually and in groups, write about work they have done in class and on field trips, such as science projects and language arts writing and reading assignments. I will then audiotape the work with the children. These audiotapes will then be edited and produced by me, and aired as "Kid's Talk" on a local radio station providing an audience for their work outside of school. Children will be interviewed about their reactions to this experience to gather perceptions from them as to how this affected their school work. Second, students will fill out pre- and post-study questionnaires about their interest in radio, and how they see themselves as writers and readers. These questionnaires will provide this researcher with information about their knowledge of radio and how students view themselves as readers and writers both before and after the study. Third, students will be asked to keep journals during the course of the study which will provide information regarding their responses to participating in the programs and having their work heard by an audience outside of the classroom. Parents will also be asked to fill out post-study questionnaires giving their opinions and reactions to the programs; and the classroom teacher will be interviewed to gain his perspective on the process the students go through to create the programs and possible educational benefits.

Significance

Classroom teachers are increasingly faced with diverse populations of students with differing interests. Designing curriculum that will interest all students is a challenge in today's classrooms. Researchers

such as Covington (1976), Fullan (1991), and Graves (1983), have pointed out the motivational factors involved when students create a product for an audience outside of the traditional classroom. This research adds to teachers' repertoir how to deliver instruction. It affirms studies supporting audiotaping as a means to enhance curriculum. This study also brings to the attention of cirriculum disgners the importance of an audience for children's work.

Background and Related Literature

Since the CBS radio network first broadcast The American School of the Air in 1930, the possibility of a community/school partnership to educate children has been recognized as viable. The programs were innovative, overseen by leading educators of the day, and received in thousands of classrooms across the United States and Canada (Dunning 1976). Media for children today is geared toward television and video. However, "It is believed by some in the field of educational media that there is a place for children's radio in modern media and educational environments" (McKenna 1993).

Current Children's Radio Programs

Radio programs are available for children and give an example of what is currently being broadcast in that format. They provide examples of radio programs which have been popular and successful in directly involving children in the decision-making process, and the writing and producing process of the programs. In this respect the children involved take more responsibility and can be more satisfied with something they have helped to create. Researchers Craggs (1992), Brady

and Jacobs (1988), and Graves (1983) speak of the positive educational effects of children creating a product for an audience.

In a 1984 publication from Action for Children's Television it was reported that there are currently "several entertainment radio programs for children in the United States" (McKenna 1993). One Boston radio station, WBZ, currently broadcasts a weekly program for children ages eight to twelve, "Kid Company", which has won several broadcasting awards. The program directly involves children in its production (CMN 1990). There are several other radio stations across the country that have programs for children; however, not all of them have children directly involved in the writing or performing of the program, leaving the majority of involvement to adults.

With the innovation of satellite transmission of radio waves the Children's Satellite Network has been created in the past few years. This format involves programs <u>for</u> and also <u>by</u> children (Burke 1992). There are a few commercial radio station across the country that have devoted their entire program format to children. Information gathered by the Children's Music Network in 1990 found at least three stations that have devoted their full schedule of programs exclusively to children. Programming ranges from one planning to expand to "as many as 20 stations around the country" with a children's literacy initiative to another network of six stations, Radio AHHS, which plans to expand with exclusively children's programming (CMN 1990). States involved are Arkansas, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota.

Many other radio stations across the country offer programs for children sporadically. This same 1990 survey found programs for

children offered from Alaska to New York. Formats for these programs range from those offering music and stories for children by adults to those written and produced by children. "Knock on Wood", produced at WAMC in Albany, New York, is a weekly half-hour series of programs of music and stories for children ages three to ten. Some programs offer call-in formats where questions are asked on the air and listeners are then given the chance to call in and respond. Length of the programs are from fifteen minutes to an hour and a half. One program, "Youth on the Air", which originates in the Bay Area, California, is distributed to other stations and offers a news format with "dramatizations and interviews about teenage concerns" (CMN 1990), written and broadcast by teenagers. Other programs which encourage children's participation are "The Web", broadcast out of Washington, DC, which targets "listeners ages seven and up and sometimes uses children as actors in dramatizations" (CMN 1990).

"Kid's Corner", out of Philadelphia, is a live program based on music and stories involving themes of interest to children. The programs invite participation through call-ins, and also have children perform weekly on the "On-Stage" portion of the broadcast. In "Cinekyd Radio Playhouse", broadcast from Warminster, Pennsylvania, an old-time radio playhouse format is used and involves children's participation through sound effects, writing of scripts and editing the programs (Burke 1992).

"Kids Alive", currently aired on WCWP Long Island, New York, is a weekly hour-long program of music co-hosted by children and is

structured around themes such as messy rooms, procrastination, the environment, and friendships.

Audiotape in the Classroom

The audiotape component in the classroom has had a long and successful history. Edgar Dale (1952, 1969, 1972) has published several books dealing with the positive aspects of using audio tape to enhance curriculum and to motivate students. Dale, in his book Building a Learning Environment, speaks of an "educative environment" as being one which will "develop the ideas, skills, and attitudes so necessary for meaningful instruction" (pg. 28).

How does one do this? Creating a product has been seen as one way of motivating students to learn (Fullan 1991). Audiotaping, by its very nature of storing the spoken word for retrieval at a future time, creates a product that, theoretically, can be listened to by many people in the community outside of the classroom. Good and Brophy, in their book Looking in Classrooms (1984), discuss the "positive impact that creating a product has on student motivation to learn" (Sprague 1993).

Children's listening to their own voices on tape has been seen as beneficial by educators. Ellen C. Mee in her book Audio-visual Media and the Disadvantaged Child, (1970) states that "the opportunities for children to record their own speech multiply the chances for children to talk with some purpose,..." (pg. 86). Mee also finds evidence of "awakened interest in speech from children hearing their own voices" (pg. 86) Audiotaping, Mee finds, is seen "as extra help in the classroom to enrich the environment..." (pg. 74). Researchers

Greenfield and Beagles-Roos (1988) found that the audio component in their study enhanced imaginative responses from those taking part.

Cecil E. Wilkinson, in his book Educational Media and You, (1971) writes about the uses of audiotaping in the classroom. He states that audiotaping is useful in "stimulating reading improvement by having children listen to themselves, and then striving to improve" (pg. 51). Also he concludes that audiotaping provides "motivation to write original stories, poems, or plays which the authors record, and which may be played back to other students" (pg. 51). Audiotaping, Wilkinson adds, provides opportunities for "self-criticism and improvement" (pg. 51).

The added factor of audience, or an awareness that what was being said was being recorded, has been found to be a motivating factor for students as a perceived "invitation to talk" (Percival, 1992). In research conducted by Jane Percival on student oral narrative some conclusions reached demonstrated student's tendency to talk openly in the presence of a tape recorder, seemingly aware that there was an "available listener", (pg. 131).

Listening as a Necessary Skill

Listening plays an important role and adds emphasis to the overall idea of audiotaping in the classroom. Reflecting on the changing times from when families listened to radio for their evening entertainment to that of television today, Krasney Brown, in her book, Taking Advantage of Media, (1986) underlines the importance of listening for children. She states that listening and understanding what one is listening to takes "concentration", and that perhaps children need more practice at

attentive listening, something they don't necessarily achieve while watching television. Listening is important, Brown emphasizes, because children need to be able to "make sense of what they hear and reconstruct a meaningful message in their own mind" (pg. 18).

Audiotape and Audience

The added factor of audience, or an awareness that what was being said was being recorded, has been found to be a motivating factor for students as a perceived "invitation to talk" (Percival 1992). Good and Brophy (1984) have stated that the product (audiotape) created by the students has a "positive impact" on a student's motivation to learn. The importance of product and audience is discussed by Carole Craggs in her book Media Education in the Primary School (1992). Craggs found in her research that when students knew that the stories they were writing would be heard by others outside of the classroom, the stories they wrote "were the longest and best pieces of creative writing the children had composed to date" (pg. 71). Brady and Jacobs, in their article "Children Responding to Children" (1988), discuss the responses children have to listening to themselves and others on audiotape. They discovered that children began to take themselves and others more seriously when they knew they were being audiotaped. The characters that they had created in stories became more real, had life to the students when they heard other children discussing them (see also Morrow and Suid, 1977).

Good and Brophy in their book Looking in Classrooms (1984) discuss the fact that reaching an audience beyond the classroom, an audience of parents and the community, "constitutes a critical shift in the

consciousness of the learner, a shift of attention from an immediate audience that shares the learner's experience and frame of reference to a larger, abstract, and unfamiliar audience" (pg. 91). Good and Brophy further state that reaching beyond the classroom creates a "community spirit that is potentially available in all classrooms", and, in turn, "that community spirit stems from recognition both of shared classroom meanings and of access of the class to a world beyond itself..." (pg. 91).

Student Motivation

Martin Covington and Richard Beery (1976), in their book Self Worth and School Learning, look at ways in which students are motivated to achieve. Some of those include the attainment of rewards, as well as intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Extrinsic motivation involves those rewards which include "teacher praise, gold stars, and grades" (pg. 23). Intrinsic motivation, state Covington and Beery, includes "self-praise or the joy of learning for its own sake" (pg. 24).

Deborah J. Stipek writes in her book Motivation to Learn: From Theory to Practice, (1988), about the importance of "strengthening the degree of intrinsic motivation students feel for learning" (pg. 72). That is, the degree to which children develop an internalized motivation to learn derived from curiosity, a feeling of competency, and autonomy.

Beverly W. Lammay, in her article "The Electronic Classroom: a Motivational Tool" (1987), speaks of the motivational aspects of hands-on involvement for children taking part in educational broadcasts at school. She also writes of how the hands-on media projects by the

children could ultimately involve the "full school community" and meet the "interests and needs of both educators and students" (pg. 17).

Donald Graves in his book, Writing: Teachers & Children at Work (1983), asks the question, "Why publish?". Publishing, Graves feels, is motivating for children as it "contributes strongly to a writer's development" (pg. 54). Audiences, he states, can include friends and relatives.

Publication may be achieved on several different levels. Publication within the school, the classroom for other students to look at, or to take home, are all levels of recognition. In a 1992 publication from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U. S. Department of Education it states that "public recognition...is one way to motivate more students, but also perhaps the most overlooked" (pg. 18).

Raymond J. Wlodkowski wrote in a 1977 National Education Association Publication, "Motivation: What Research Says to the Teacher", about the relationship of motivation to learning. He asks the question, "does the motivated person change more quickly, for a longer period of time, or with more profound effects?" (pg. 6). Unfortunately, he concludes, the answer to that question remains uncertain. However, he encourages further research and debate by stating that "the effects of motivation may depend on "the type of learning...the type of task...and the type of setting..." (pg. 6).

The School-Community Connection

Those who report on the importance of a school/community relationship include Scott Thompson in his article "Interweavings: An

Independent School in Flint, Michigan is Not so Independent When it Comes to Families and the Community", (1993), and also Robert F. Sexton in his article "Building Family-Friendly Communities: Observations and Lessons from Two Years of Kentucky School Reform" (1993). Sexton reports that in an effort to improve education in their district this community concluded that "parents and citizens share responsibility with teachers" in educating their children.

Thompson, in another article, "Seven Action Plans for Tightening School-Community Connections" (1993), reports on the "realization that schools and communities must work together to enable children to achieve more of their full potential".

An extensive study by Denny Taylor and Catherine Dorsey-Gaines (1988) demonstrated the essential role that the family plays in a child's education. In part the study concluded that educators need to foster the "family and community involvement in school programs" (pg. 211). The study also recognized the need for every child to be given "the opportunity to experience a private sense of challenge and a public sense of achievement" (pg. 210).

Audiotaping and the creation of a product for students, and the presentation of that product to the community outside of the classroom have been found to be helpful and motivating in the classroom in certain instances (Bunce-Crim 1992, Fullan 1991, Newkirk, Atwell 1988, Graves 1983). What are some ways in which these components can be combined to motivate students to achieve and learn? This study will attempt to answer this question by defining the problem; addressing the need for parent/community involvement in the schools; researching the educational

theories which support the value of creating an audience for students individual and group work; and, describing one model of a radio program written and created by students.

Delimitations

This research involves one fourth grade class of twenty-two children in a public school of a college town in New England. Even though the medium of choice for most children today is the visual medium, television or videotape, because of the instances where audiotaping in the classroom has been shown to be a positive force in learning, this study will deal solely with the audio medium, radio and audio tapes. The audience for the program, Kid's Talk, will be that of the locale in which the school is located and the small surrounding towns. Though the children became involved in radio technology to a certain extent, this study is not intended to be a program to train them in radio production skills.

The curricular methods and materials used by the teacher in this study were adjunct to ongoing classroom curriculum and not especially designed for radio.

This is not a quantitative study and the results are not intended to be statistically valid.

Research Design

This study was conducted in a public school in one fourth grade classroom over a six month period. The school is located in western Massachusetts. The school population is made up of students from both professional and blue collar families. The class taking part in this

study is multicultural, heterogeneously grouped and includes Caucasians, Asians, and Black Americans.

During a six-month period the children wrote about both group and individual class work. At least two days a week were set aside for this work, which was included in final audiotaped productions aired on a local radio station. The students' work consisted of reports written by the children, either alone or with a group of two to four, about the work they did in class, and also work that extended outside of class. These reports resulted from ideas taken from curricular areas the class was studying, or suggested by students themselves. Each planned program had a theme, such as holidays, science projects, or field trips the students had taken. Each program was divided into segments of news, sports, and poems and stories, which allowed students to include original works in addition to classwork contained in the overall theme. I visited the class once every two weeks to meet with groups of students and, as explained in detail in Chapter III, tape recorded their written work. These tapes were then edited by this researcher in the form of a series of fifteen minute programs, "Kid's Talk", which were aired Friday evenings at 6:30 on a local radio station approximately once a month for six months. The target audience ranged in age from eight to ten years.

Evaluation

To evaluate this study, triangulation of data, or "bringing more than one source of data to bear on a single point", (Rossman, Marshall 1989) will be used.

Qualitative, case-study research such as that described by Rossman and Marshall (1989), allows the flexibility for an exploratory and descriptive study such as is involved here. These same methods for research are also described by Merriam (1988) and Patton (1989).

Students were given both pre- and post-study questionnaires concerning their knowledge of radio and to gain insight to how they view themselves as both readers and writers. Journals were kept by participants during the course of the study for the purpose of gaining insight as to how they responded to hearing themselves on radio. Students were also interviewed on audiotape both before and after the study to elicit responses as to their and their parents' radio listening habits and, in the case of the post-study interview, how they felt about their experiences of creating their own publicly aired radio programs. This information provided insight, also, concerning participants' motivation to take part and to do well during the course of the study.

Parents of participants were given questionnaires to fill out after completion of the unit to give this researcher information to determine whether or not they listened to the programs, if they listened together with their child, and their opinions of and reactions to the programs.

Finally, the classroom teacher was interviewed by this researcher at the completion of the programs, on audiotape, to obtain his professional evaluation of any perceived motivational aspects of the taping and public airing of the programs to the participants.

Background for "Kid's Talk"

Being a professional radio broadcaster for thirteen years, and a student of education for more than fourteen, I have long had an interest in the possible educational value of radio for children. In 1991 a radio program for children I conceived called "Just For Kids", which consisted of stories, songs, and readings by others, including author Julius Lester who read from his recent book, The Tales of Uncle Remus: The Adventures of Brer Rabbit, and my eight year old son, won a second place award for children's radio programming from the Massachusetts Broadcasters Association. While taking a graduate class the following summer, I was approached by another student, Jack, who was, at the time, an unemployed teacher and hoping he would be hired by a local school system that fall. If that occurred, he asked, would I be interested in doing radio shows with his students?

Before that time I had worked in a studio by myself and had not really considered bringing the studio into the classroom. But the more I contemplated what could be accomplished educationally for the children involved by doing their own radio shows, the more willing I was to try this new concept. This teacher's idea was to bring a positive, hands-on learning experience to his class while, at the same time, combining that experience with what he thought would be fun for them.

During the summer of 1991 Jack was hired as a fourth grade teacher for the local school system, and thus began to formulate his approach to the programs he wanted to do with his class. It seemed an ambitious project for someone starting his first year at a new school. But we agreed that nothing would be attempted until he had gotten to know his

students and his new school. About six weeks into the school year Jack called me to say he was ready to start planning programs with the children.

My first step was to come into Jack's classroom and meet the children. In mid October I visited with the children for the first time. Telling them who I was and what we planned to do, I tried to alleviate any fears and answer any questions they had about the process of putting radio shows together. Their questions were simple and straight forward. They wanted to know what would happen if they made mistakes. Did they have to be perfect? Who was going to hear the programs? What radio station would the shows be on? What day and what time? As I answered their questions I began to get a sense of what the children were like and how it would be working with them. I loved the idea. They seemed very eager to do the shows and began to ask me about ideas they had. Watching their eagerness suggested to me that they were not afraid, in fact they were quite willing, to have their work heard by an audience outside of the classroom.

Pilot Study: Kid's Time

In the preceding school year I had produced a group of programs in a pilot project involving children and radio which I called "Kid's Time". This project consisted of a series of very short, perhaps five-minute, segments involving children talking about books they had read, if they would recommend those books to other children, what types of books they liked, and why they were attracted to certain books. The programs were taped, by invitation of their teachers, in the children's classroom before school. I spoke conversationally with one to three

students at a time, usually in a corner of the room by ourselves, and tape recorded our discussions. These were aired on the local radio station where I worked, with little or no editing by me necessary. There was no formal outline or format to the programs, they were merely dialogues with children about books. The responses from the children knowing that they were going to be heard on the radio were encouraging. They wanted to know exactly when the programs would be on so that they and their parents could listen.

It was this pilot project, "Kid's Time", more than anything else, that led me to believe that the audience factor could be motivating for children. There were mornings that I went into a classroom when some children appeared reluctant to be tape recorded. After a little encouragement from their teacher they agreed to be taped. For the most part, those previously reluctant students began talking with ease. If, however, a student still expressed reluctance the taping was discontinued. Overall, the majority of students who had the chance were eager to tell me about their favorite books while talking into a microphone. Each child knew that what they were saying was going to be heard on the radio, and all wanted to know what day and time they could hear themselves. I felt at the time that it gave them a sense of importance by being singled out and recognized.

The teachers I worked with doing "Kid's Time" were enthusiastic about the project feeling that it encouraged children to talk about what they were thinking and about what they believed. They also felt that by talking about their ideas and hearing it played back gave legitimacy to their ideas. It was being heard by others outside the classroom. These

programs were not submitted for awards. I was just having fun watching the children become excited about being heard and expressing themselves.

Radio As A Means To Achieve An Audience

Central to this research is the question of audience as a factor in children's motivation to achieve in school. Through the process of having children create their own radio programs, "Kid's Talk", radio served as a vehicle to create an audience for the children's school work. This audience was made up of parents, siblings, other relatives, and also the community at large.

A part of our country's social history since the 1920's, (MacDonald 1979, Buxton & Owen 1966) radio has been used successfully to teach our children about current world conditions, and diverse ethnicities (see also Levenson 1958, Lambert 1963, Lammay 1987, Jaspers 1990, and Anderson 1991).

Taking part in their own radio programs has been traditionally successful for children in the United States. During the 1940's quiz programs on radio with children as the major participants proved to be educationally beneficial for the children involved as well as popular with an audience of children (Dunning 1976).

In recent years young children in several cities across the country have produced their own radio programs on a regular basis. Writing and performing these programs has reportedly given the children involved a chance to attain "self esteem" by offering their own work to an audience of listeners (Walsh 1994). Students in Minneapolis produce programs on their own school radio station, aimed at students and their

parents, giving them "an outlet" for creativity (Walsh, pg. 15). In this study radio offers students such an audience.

Student-centered learning opportunities have been offered to children by having them produce their own radio shows. Programs such as those put together by teachers in School District 25 in Flushing, New York have been successful in engaging students in reading and writing, and developing poise and confidence in the arts of oral presentation and discussion. These are areas that teacher and developer of the interactive radio programs by students, Rose Reissman, sees as "critical for responsible citizenship in the world beyond school" (Flanagan 1993).

Publishing of students' work by offering it to an audience outside of the classroom, as Donald Graves (1991) suggests, "solidifies the reasons for writing in the first place. It is sharing information from one point in time with people in other locations and occasions" (pg. 55). Graves explores this idea of "sharing" published works with others, noting that it "serves as a specific anchor for the future during the composing" (pg. 54).

Audiotapes of the radio programs produced by the children during this research were supplied to the school creating a source of data about curriculum techniques for other teachers and the school as a whole. The tapes are also a source of information for the community at large about the teacher's efforts to create diverse educational opportunities for the students.

Audiotapes of the radio shows themselves will not be used as specific sources of data for this study, as it is the main intention of this research to determine children's reactions to the knowledge that

their work is being heard by an audience. Data will instead be gathered from participants' journals, parent and student questionnaires, and teacher and student interviews, which will be looked at to determine what took place in the classroom while the programs were being prepared. Data will be gathered from these sources allowing me to ascertain children's and parents' specific reactions to hearing those programs on the radio, and of children having an audience for their work. The community audience created by airing programs written and performed by children on radio, as researchers Craggs (1992), Stevenson and Carr (1993), Eisner (1991), attest is a valuable educational experience.

Researcher Marsha M. Sprague (1993) feels that students learning is enhanced when they create a real product or perform for an audience, as was the case in this research. Sprague, in experiences with her own students where an audience was involved, has witnessed a total involvement of her class in what they were doing. It was this involvement of students that I felt would be facilitated by the children having a radio audience for their work.

I had previously aired a number of programs for and with children on the station where I work so I knew there would be no problem in airing "Kid's Talk". Of course the plan was presented to my program director before any work on the programs was started, and he was quite willing to set time aside for them. The programs were heard at 6:30 on Wednesday evenings. This time was agreed upon by all the participants, including the teacher, the children, the parents, and the radio station. We felt this would be a time when families would be at home together, and most people would be able to listen to the programs. Also this time

slot was available at the radio station. My fourteen year association with local radio, and my previous experiences with children and radio, made the decision to use radio for this research a natural one for me.

Why I Chose Radio Versus Television

Radio is an intimate medium. A broadcast usually consists of one person and a microphone. That one person may add music, another recording, access a satellite transmission, or talk to someone else in the studio. There are engineers who keep the equipment in working condition; other broadcasters who record programs for transmission and make commercials; salespeople whose job it is to sell time on the air to pay for everything, and the listeners. But at the time of the actual broadcast, there is, in my experience, just one person in the studio running the whole show. Larger radio stations than the one I worked for have engineers who work alongside the broadcaster, especially for call-in talk shows. But, in reality, the only person necessary for the broadcast is the person operating the microphone. I believe that this is one of the main reasons I chose radio over television for a career. The aspect of control. I am the type of person who likes to know exactly what's going to happen and when.

Television, on the other hand, is a much more complicated operation. It takes a great deal of cooperation and communication to get a television program on the air successfully. Camera operators are necessary to transmit the image. A director has to orchestrate which view of the people involved will be broadcast. Sound people are needed to adjust microphone levels, lighting people are necessary, a floor director gives the actors directions and time signals in a television

production. When these people work together well, the program can be quite successful. However, if something goes wrong in the radio studio, I have no one to blame but myself.

I relinquished this control somewhat when I agreed to do the radio shows with Jack and his class. By opening up my studio, so to speak, and letting the children take over some control, I opened up my own experience not only as a broadcaster and producer, but also as an educator, to otherwise unknown possibilities, both educational and entertaining.

In this chapter I have presented an overview of the dissertation, provided a look at other radio programs currently available for children, plus a background for "Kid's Talk" and how the idea was developed. As stated previously, what further chapters in this dissertation look at is how the perception of "audience" affected the children's work. I also examine the idea of how the inclusion of parents and the community in the equation affected their work and how the children viewed themselves as participants in the programs. In further chapters this dissertation also explores the idea that the rewards received went beyond the MBA award; that there was an internal motivation for many concerned.

What this dissertation looks at, in part, are the children's reactions to both writing and performing their own programs which are then heard by the larger community outside the school. Historically, radio programs for children, which include children, have been very successful. This study also looks at children's responses to their own

and other's work, as well as their reactions to parent's and families listening to their work.

This dissertation examines further the findings of Covington and Beery as well as Raymond Wlodkowski, Donald Graves, Deborah Stipek, Thomas Newkirk and Nancie Atwell as they explore the motivational factors involved in the adult recognition and publication of children's work.

In chapter two this dissertation examines past and current literature and research providing a foundation for the use of audiotaping in the classroom; it discusses research and theories pertaining to student motivation and audience; also chapter two examines literature pertaining to the significance of a parent/school/community partnership and its importance to the education of children.

In chapter three this dissertation describes the setting and participants in the study. It then describes how the programs were written and produced. This chapter recounts the implementation of the study and the detailed process involved in producing one of those programs.

Chapter four of this dissertation evaluates the findings of this researcher during the course of the study. I look at children's anonymous journals to determine if writing and producing audiotaped programs for an audience was motivating to them in any way. This chapter also examines the audiotaped interview with the classroom teacher to see if, from that teacher's professional judgement, the audiotaping and producing of programs by fourth grade students was

motivating in any way. Finally, chapter four discusses any difficulties encountered.

Chapter five draws conclusions regarding the value of using the audiotaping and public airing of programs, written and performed by students, as a means of motivating them to do well in school. Based on the findings of this study, recommendations were made for further study as an outgrowth of this research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

To provide a foundation for this study, research in three main areas was reviewed. These areas are: (1) the use of audiotape in the classroom to enhance curriculum; (2) the impact of a perceived audience on children's classwork; (3) theories concerning motivation to achieve in the classroom.

The term "motivation", as it is used in this study, will be defined as "an inner urge that prompts a person to action with a sense of purpose" (Random House Dictionary, 1978).

"The modern approach to learning places the teacher in a new role- that of manager, organizer, motivator, and evaluator of learning experiences. The teacher makes choices from a rich variety of media and takes a larger role in the development of instructional materials." With this observation, Edgar Dale, teacher and researcher, begins his book Audiovisual Methods in Teaching, 3rd Edition.

Audiotape in the Classroom

Listening as a Necessary Skill

Paramount among learning experiences for children, according to Dale, is that of listening. He recognizes this as one of the fundamental language skills. Children gain a large portion of their education, and also, a large portion of their knowledge of the world through listening. Indeed, children begin their lives by looking and listening before they begin to speak. It is, therefore, crucial that

children acquire the skill of listening. Dale (1969) points out that, as a literate society, we sometimes forget that "almost half the people in the world cannot read or write" (pg. 477). They do communicate, however, and can listen to media, radio and recordings. Ancient civilizations passed on their history and heritage through oral recitation, storytelling and singing. Native Americans transferred knowledge from parent to child through the art of storytelling. This, according to Dale, was because the audience for the spoken word was large. The audience for the written word, because few could read or write, was small.

Listening is not a passive activity. There are four levels of listening according to Dale. Level one is "mood" or background listening and requires limited attention; level two is meant for "relaxation, escape, getting your mind off something rather than on it"; level three is one where we might be listening to weather reports or traffic information that is temporarily useful and needs some analysis; level four is the stage of analytical and critical listening (pg. 478).

It is at level four, Dale suggests, that the listener not only "seeks a serious answer to a serious question but evaluates the quality of the answer" (pg. 478). He cites the examples of round-table and spirited discussions. The debate or political policy speech would also be at this level of listener concentration.

Listening at level four concerns teachers in the classroom, concludes Dale. And "radio and recordings highlight the importance of listening" (pg. 478). Using these tools teachers can help their

students to become more sensitive to a broader range of communication skills, and can also broaden vocabulary and language development.

Some other ways in which listening can be enhanced in the classroom include, Dale suggests, speaking so that you, the teacher, can be heard; let children know that if they have the opportunity to speak they also have an obligation to listen; if students feel what they have to say is treated as important they will also listen to what others have to say; and they will develop a routine of give-and-take discussions in the classroom.

Literacy skills for the twenty-first century include, among others, being able to listen on several levels, according to Maggie Hill in a 1992 article in "Electronic Learning". She goes on to discuss education in the twenty-first century as demanding more from students, not less. Processing information will be uppermost in importance for students, and media play an important role in mastering the processing of information. The forms of communication used in schools, says Hill, will need to address these vital skills for students.

The ability to listen and to discriminate, analyze, and interpret textual, audio and visual information is a skill students will need to develop. She states that "reading, writing, speaking, and listening are a portion of everything we do" (pg. 30). "Speaking and listening skills are as important as writing and reading" (pg. 33) states Hill. She continues that students are "going to have to communicate with other people and understand concepts beyond the traditional definition of literacy" (Pg. 33).

Another skill that Hill discusses in her book as being vitally important for today's students to master is not only that of processing information and creating personal and collaborative meanings, but also being able to "produce products or performances that will enable them to apply the information to real situations that affect their lives" (pg. 29). This ability to produce a product will be addressed later in this dissertation as an important outcome of the research done for this study.

Krasney Brown (1986) in her book Taking Advantage of Media, looks at children's learning experiences as related to listening. She states that "listening to stories and being able to read are related" (pg. 27). There is a correlation, Brown cites, between children's "comprehension of spoken language and of written prose" (pg. 27). Brown's research suggests that listening to language "exercises mental skills also needed to read" (pg. 27), and that there is a concentration necessary, to "identify words, interpret them in grammatical context, and remember their meaning" (pg. 27). Brown says further that these basic abilities help a child with either listening or reading.

As stated before, the act of listening can be active or passive. Listening critically, says Dale, involves the realization that spoken words, coming from a person and not the printed page, carry more force than written words, and "because they convey emotion, they sway us more easily" (pg. 480). The critical listener listens to both sides of the argument before making a decision or coming to conclusions. The critical listener organizes listening habits and makes it a point to listen for important materials. The person interested in hearing the

story behind the story in the daily news can listen to several different news broadcasts before drawing conclusions.

A. Jaspers' (1990) indicates in his article "Focus of Audio" that "the audio channel is of utmost importance for our orientation and communication" (pg. 216). Research conducted by Jaspers relates that "much of the process of teaching and learning is verbal interaction" (pg. 216). Jaspers agrees with Dale's conclusions that audio in education can be functional in several ways. Those include "presenting stimulus (which means subject matter)...providing feedback, and enhancing retention and transfer" (pg. 217).

Audiotape and Listening Skills

Among those who advocate using audiotapes to help in acquiring listening skills in the classroom are C. W. Bending (1970), Brian Firth (1968), and Jerome Johnston (1987). Johnston states in his book, Electronic Learning, From Audiotape to Videodisc, that the fact that audiotapes can be replayed to emphasize points makes them valuable for many learners. Studies cited by Johnston suggest that "audio by itself may have an advantage for aural content...such as foreign language, because it forces students to focus solely on the aural components" (pg. 31).

Firth in his book, Mass Media in the Classroom, suggests the use of audiotaping and listening to students by students in the form of interviews. Also a valuable use of this learning strategy, Firth continues, is discussions of "provocative news items (which) may be used to start debate in the classroom" (pg. 75). Besides increasing language skills, this technique, Firth says, "will show the children the skill

demanded of an interviewer" (pg. 75) when the tape is played back and children listen to themselves as interviewer.

Bending focuses on the personal appeal to the students of hearing their own voices, and also the aspect of the patience of a tape recorder. It can be listened to and then played back again and again. "It will repeat as many times as necessary anything that it has previously said" (pg. 287).

Further research cited by Johnston (1987) underlines the value of using audiotapes for some children who have learning disabilities and appeared to retain more from a lecture when they listened to it on tape as opposed to a live lecture.

Reinforcing research on the value of listening to audiotapes for some students, Ellen C. Mee (1970) states in her book, Audio-visual Media and the Disadvantaged Child, that "children need rich experiences of hearing and learning to listen to, and of using language in relation to all their activities, to enjoy its delights and sense its power in communication and social relationships" (pg. 38). For children who have not had much experience with language, (reading, being read to) the opportunity to listen to stories is valuable. These stories, (in this 1970 study as heard on radio) gave the children not only the chance to listen, but to "join in and re-enact" as well (pg. 39).

This study concluded that, "the value to these children of repetition carried on well beyond the time when more linguistically developed children drop it, is much underrated in the schools" (pg. 39). One conclusion reached in this study was that taped versions of stories for children to listen to again and again was found valuable in their

language development. An observation from this study also found "children in small groups listening to tape-players and with a single earphone, completely absorbed in listening - for many, a new experience in itself" (pg. 39).

The research by Mee emphasizes that being given the opportunity to record their own speech multiplies the chances for children to "talk with some purpose" (pg. 86). The study quotes evidence of an "awakened interest in speech from children hearing their own voices" (pg. 86).

Cecil E. Wilkinson (1971) endorses the use of audiotapes and tape recorders in the classroom in his book, Educational Media and You. In a list of suggested uses for audiotapes he explores the importance such use can have in determining "reading ability of pupils at different times during the year", also of "stimulating reading improvement by having children listen to themselves, and then striving to improve" (pg. 51). This is also, Wilkinson adds, a means of presenting recordings of student news and important school events for school archives.

In his book, Communication and the Schools, (1970), C. W. Bending states his research has shown increased student appreciation of an author's work when listened to on audiotape.

From an article by Boda and Tompa (1991) we see how using media in the classroom (whether audio or visual) is important in the classroom because its existence "multiplies the teacher" and diversifies the lesson.

Jane Percival (1992) in her research of student oral narrative discovered that students adapted easily to the presence of a tape recorder in the classroom, and that "students even spoke directly to a

mechanical device" because they knew that what they were saying would be heard (pg. 131). Also Percival found that students talked more freely when they perceived that what they were saying was "encouraged and supported", as in the presence of a tape recorder (pg. 126).

Radio and Listening

There is no medium better suited to listening than radio. One benefit of using radio and recordings in the classroom, suggests Edgar Dale, is that they are cost effective. These ideas are reinforced by Dale in his works concerning the use of audiovisual media in the classroom (1952, 1969, 1972). The cost of cassette tapes, a cassette player, or of using a radio to let children practice listening, is negligible. When a current event is happening, radio coverage is immediate and live. I can remember personally listening to astronauts talk to their control station on earth, and having to listen very carefully to understand what they were saying. At the same time I was imagining what they looked like and what they were experiencing. This was important to me because it was history, and I found it fantastic.

The phenomenon of children's attraction to radio is ongoing according to several sources. In chapter one I discussed several radio stations across the country that offer programs for children. A 1984 Action for Children's Television publication lists many areas and radio programs being offered for children. Their key to success is not only that they are geared toward children, but that several programs offer children a chance to participate, thus giving them a chance to be a part of the process and be heard.

A 1992 report in Radio Only magazine lists stations across the country airing programs for children. In 1990 a Minneapolis radio station became "The Children's Satellite Network" airing programs exclusively for children. They cite the recent boom in music geared toward children as one of the reasons for their success. The Disney Corporation has produced a number of soundtracks from its movies for children. Others who have produced and marketed music solely for children include Sesame Street and 60's Rock star Little Richard. The music is enjoying enormous success and has been made a part of CSN.

Glenda Donovan, who produced "KidsWord" at WFCR (FM) in Amherst, Massachusetts has said, "I want to relate closely enough to kids' own creative efforts and ambitions that when they hear it, they think, 'I could do that too!'"

When people speak of the differences between radio and television, the aspect of imagination is often reinforced as the main difference. Patricia Greenfield and Jessica Beagles-Roos conducted a study (1988) in which two groups of students were presented with unfinished stories. One group was presented a video version of a story, the other group was presented a version of the same story as presented on radio. After each group listened and/or watched their unfinished story they were then asked to write an ending. Their findings indicated that "radio led to significantly greater creation of new story material for the measures of imaginative events, specific characters, vague characters, and imaginative words" (pg. 77). These results suggest that radio indeed stimulates imaginative responses in children.

Krasney Brown (1986) in her book, Taking Advantage of Media, reinforces the Greenfield, Beagles-Roos study's findings. She states discovering that having children listening to a "radio narration elicits better recall of poetic or flavorful vocabulary than does a cartoon version of the same text" (pg. 22). And again she concludes "even preschoolers, notorious for their brief story descriptions, include more specific wording after a strictly auditory delivery" (pg. 22).

Reading curricular programs available for teachers include media formats with a combination of audio recordings and printed texts. These, according to "Nonprint Media and Reading", a 1979 publication of the International Reading Association, "have gained acceptance in many reading programs" (pg. 6). The addition of audio recordings to the printed text "seems to aid those students whose reading skills are not yet fully developed or whose motivation to read is particularly low" (pg. 6).

The Audience Factor

When children are very young they have a captive audience in their parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, and perhaps others as well. As they begin school they become competitors for recognition in their new environment. This new environment is not always as willing to be audience to their work, as everyone in school is making an effort to be recognized for what they are doing, but are not always.

Carol E. Craggs (1992) writes about her experiences with children writing for an audience and how this resulted in children expanding on what had been done previously in the classroom. The realization by children that what they were writing was being read by others caused

them to produce the "longest and best pieces of creative writing the children had composed to date (pg. 71). These classroom lessons were reinforced with audio tapes of what they had written.

Stevenson and Carr (1993) suggest that "the child's need for recognition and approval from classmates is especially strong" (pg. 13). They continue that "they hunger for opportunities to show what they can do and also for recognition for their accomplishments" (pg. 14). Stevenson and Carr also state that children need approval and recognition from peers, parents and teachers to develop a sense of success and of their being worthwhile people.

Helping students find their "personal signature" is an important fundamental aim of schools, says Elliot Eisner (1991). In his article "What Really Counts in Schools", he underlines the importance of celebrating their uniqueness, and helping them "reach down into their unique beings in order to find content that can be made visible in the public world" (pg. 16).

This public world can consist of the students in the class, parents and siblings at home, and also the larger community outside of the home. Marna Bunce-Crim, educator and researcher, has written about the positive effects on children's writing when they are aware that their writing has an audience. This perception of an audience "gets kids writing for a purpose", says Bunce-Crim, and can help children learn to be "active citizens who make a difference in their communities and their world". She discusses several ways of accomplishing this in a 1992 article for "Instructor" magazine. These include letters to the principal about school related issues; letters of complaint to

manufacturers of things they have bought but didn't work; letters of request to companies for curriculum materials; and also they can write letters to college students in the education department studying at their age level. This last suggestion would, says Bunce-Crim, create educational opportunities at both ends of the correspondence. College students studying elementary school writing would be able to experience first-hand the developmental levels of their writers, and young students would enjoy writing to college students. Creating a school or even a class newspaper with students as reporters would create a class or school spirit and children enjoy seeing their names in print.

Reinforcing this stance are Thomas Good and Jere Brophy (1984) in their book, Looking in Classrooms. Especially important, Good and Brophy emphasize, is the writing of letters to those outside the classroom and the school. Writing letters, they feel, "links the class to the wider world" (pg. 91). More than that it fosters a sense of community spirit as it enables "access of the class to a world beyond itself..." (pg. 91) allowing an escape from "academic writing" that may fall on "deaf ears" (pg. 91).

Learning is enhanced, suggests Marsha M. Sprague, when students create a real product or perform before a live audience. In an article written for Educational Leadership (April 1993) Sprague speaks of her experiences with students creating a product or performance then presented to an audience. The response and involvement of her class was total. In Sprague's experience with a class newspaper, which was published and distributed throughout the school and was sent home to parents, she found that excitement level was high and that what she was

teaching during her class was immediately reflected in the class newspaper. The learning had been applied. When the newspaper was expanded to two classes of students and became an after school project with only some students work being selected for limited publication, interest in the project was lost. Sprague defines what happened as a loss of immediate feedback. When students' work was published and they knew "that other students, parents, and teachers would be reading the stories" (pg. 68), they were excited and wanted to do well for their audience. When the publication became limited to an after school project, only a few students remained interested over a long period of time.

Publishing students' work is looked on as a positive experience by Paula Flemming (1988), who states in Understanding Writing, "publishing, the final step in the writing process, is making writing public" (pg. 164). Publication widens the student's world. She offers the notion that there are other forms of publishing which include radio. Presenting "the children's writing with a complementary musical background" (pg. 166) is a way of bringing the work from the classroom to public recognition. The tape, Flemming suggests, could also be used in the classroom at a later date. Bulletin boards, walls and doors within the classroom and school are ways to publicly display school work, along with letters home and student newspapers.

In his book Writing: Teachers & Children at Work, (1983), Donald Graves further reinforces publication of students' work. "Writing is a public act", states Graves, "meant to be shared with many audiences" (pg. 54). Publishing contributes to a writer's development, suggests

Graves, and also serves as what he describes as a "specific anchor" for writing that will be done in the future (pg. 54).

Graves also states in his book that publishing "contributes to a sense of audience" for children (pg. 54). As children put their stories in the classroom or library for checking out by other children, they can envision their stories being read by others, by teachers, or friends.

Graves concludes that publication of work is "important for all children...not the privilege of the classroom elite" (pg. 55). Public recognition of a child's work is a "mode of literary enfranchisement" (pg. 55) for each child in the classroom.

An advantage for children of being aware of an audience for their work is explained by Rubin and O'Looney (1990) as giving them a chance to reflect on what they have written. Rubin argues that "audience awareness is fundamental to revision" (pg. 281). Both researchers have found that studies they conducted confirmed that "even minimal audience cuing (making children aware of)" strengthened writing in general and "revision in particular" (pg. 290).

Publishing and Parent Recognition

An integral part of the presentation of students' work to the world outside of the classroom is the part that parents play in becoming an audience for their child's work at school. As Donald Graves has stated in his work the presentation and recognition of a child's work by the parent is very important to the child's sense of accomplishment. Marna Bunce-Crim (1992) also suggests that from her experience she has found that presenting writing projects bound in a book to parents is an

excellent way to create an audience for children's work, and at the same time lets parents see the work being accomplished by their children.

Wlodkowski (1977) as well as Bangert-Drowns, Kulik, Kulik, and Morgan (1991) acknowledge the importance of feedback and attention to students work and accomplishments as playing a part in their success. Feedback, by teachers, peers, and parents, was found by these researchers to be an "essential element in learning and instruction" (pg. 214).

Forms of publication of children's work according to Paula Flemming (1988) include gifts of a student's published book to a family member. And, she adds, "there is not a more appreciative audience" (pg. 166). Putting children's stories and poems in books to be brought home is tangible evidence of work and progress at school. Bringing their "book" home also widens their audience to include parents and relatives, receiving even greater attention.

Marsha Sprague (1993) from her research has found that "inviting parents to the school for the purpose of viewing the outcomes of learning is a known factor in student achievement and effective schools".

Clark, Lotto, and MacCarthy (1980) collaborated to bring together a report on several studies that involved schools reporting exceptional performance of their students. What they were trying to find were "school-related factors that seemed to account for educational success" (pg. 468). Of the forty studies looked at, "13 involved the relationship between parent involvement and achievement, and 11 of the 13 reported a positive relationship" (pg. 468-9).

Fantini (1980) also reports on several studies that affirm the importance of parent involvement in schools. The findings of these studies conclude that when parents were "trained to assist their youngsters in mathematics as a supplement to the normal school curriculum ...student achievement jumped significantly" (pg. 14).

Likewise, Berlin and Berlin researched several Head Start remedial programs and found that the programs with the most lasting effects on children were those "whose mothers became directly involved in the classroom process" (Fantini, 1980, pg.14).

Ziegler (1987) reviewed research on the effects of parent involvement in schools which included studies in both Canada and the United States. Her conclusions confirm other findings on this subject and confirm that "parent involvement in instructionally related activities at home and/or at school benefits children" (Fullan, 1991, pg. 231).

Studies done by Epstein (1986, 1988), underline this fact by pointing out that, "there is consistent evidence that parents' encouragement, activities, interest at home and their participation at school affect their children's achievement," (1988, Ch. 1).

Epstein concludes,

> Parents were aware of and responded positively to teachers' efforts to involve them in learning activities at home. Parents with children in the classrooms of teachers who built parent involvement into their regular teaching practice were more aware of teachers' efforts, received more ideas from teachers, knew more about their child's instructional program...(pg. 291).

The conclusion one must come to from the above research is that schools cannot be expected to educate children to their fullest potential by themselves. There must be active and consistent involvement from parents and others in the community to allow all children to succeed.

The Community's Role

Researchers suggest that there is a need for communities to take an active interest in their schools. An extensive study by Denny Taylor and Catherine Dorsey-Gaines (1988) shows that it is not educationally beneficial for students to separate completely their lives at school and their lives in the greater community. In this study of inner-city families Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines found a need to link the two worlds, (family/ community and school) in order to fully and successfully educate the child into society. Children obviously have lives outside of the school. These researchers saw from their research that very often the "complex social and cognitive communicative" (pg. 208) learning that children do outside of the school has very little to do with the learning that goes on inside the school, and is "not relevant to the definitions of school learning" (pg. 208). Schools should make an effort, Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines continue, to recognize the complex cognitive learning that takes place outside of the school for students and incorporate that learning into the learning that takes place at school. Their research points out the importance of family and community involvement in school programs as essential, and concludes with the question, "what if teachers take that local knowledge and build a vision with their children of a participatory democratic society in

which everyone has the opportunity to contribute and prosper?" (pg. 208).

In an excerpt from The 1991 ASCD Yearbook, Charlotte C. Anderson, in examining the importance to education of community, suggests several ways to incorporate community into the elementary curriculum. Some ways seen as important were bringing parents, and other adults, into the classroom "to enhance students' sense of personal connection with history, the community, and the world" (pg. 131). Other ways suggested to reinforce the importance of community were taking field trips to explore the differences and sameness of their surroundings.

Scott Thompson writes also of the importance of the family and community connection to schools in a 1993 article in "Equity and Choice". In his research of community involvement with schools Thompson found that valuable life experiences could be had for students when local businesses, such as the town newspaper, became involved with the school. This involvement included students recording portions of the newspaper for blind citizens. By recording newspaper articles for the blind students became actively involved with, not only practicing their reading skills and becoming more informed themselves, but they came to recognize and appreciate the difficulties that blind people have in society. The article cites one instance where a young girl had been "going through a phase of disengagement" with education that was "beginning to snuff (her) potential" (pg. 18). Her teacher got her involved with the Red Cross as well as reading newspapers for the blind. The student's involvement, according to her teacher, "reconnected her to her potential and with what education is for" (pg. 18). This school in

Michigan found a way to link the community with the learning that goes on inside the classroom and found this link to be very beneficial to its students. The article concludes with the finding that "the idea of a learning community in the large sense is what a society is" (pg. 20).

Thompson, in other research (1993) found that "schools and communities must work together to enable children to achieve more of their full potential" (pg. 27). By drawing on the valuable experience and resources of the larger community, several schools described in Thompson's research found that both the schools and their communities could benefit. What the schools sought, according to Thompson, was to raise student outcomes "through a strategy involving districtwide inservice" (pg. 29). This theory on the importance of school/community partnership is echoed by Heller (1992), White and Matz (1992), Kanthak (1992), Schurr (1992), and Voelkl (1993).

In a school system in Kentucky, researcher Robert F. Sexton (1993) found that schools are inevitably "woven together with the other threads in the community fabric" (pg. 12). Sexton quotes in his article, "Building Family-Friendly Communities" (1993), an African proverb which reads "It takes a whole village to raise a child" (pg. 13). In working together this community decided on several ways in which communities could help to make a positive impact on schools. Among those were to "think about incentives to encourage young people to <u>want</u> to do well in school - (and that) employers and visible leaders" could help to accomplish this (pg. 13). Another way looked at was to "engage young people personally in community projects because taking personal responsibility is a great way to learn and grow" (pg. 13).

Michael G. Fullan (1991) makes a case for parent/community involvement in schools in his book The New Meaning of Educational Change. Citing many studies on the subject Fullan insists that,

> There is consistent evidence that parents' encouragement, activities, interest at home and their participation at school affect their children's achievement..(pg. 228)

Since, Fullan explains, there may be some confusion as to what is meant by parent involvement, he lists what he feels should be included. One, parent involvement at school in the form of volunteering; two, parent involvement in learning activities at home, such as helping with homework and projects; three, home/community-school relations in the form of consistent communication; and four, governance, such as taking part in advisory councils (pg. 228).

Motivation and Learning

Philip K. Piele, Professor and Director of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), emphasizes the importance of student motivation in a recent ERIC publication (1992) by stating that,

> every educator needs to be concerned about motivation. It is a quality that students, teachers, parents, school administrators, and other members of the community must have if our educational system is to prepare young people adequately for the challenges and demands of the coming century (pg. iii).

Ron Renchler, editor of this same ERIC publication, stresses several points in discussing research on student motivation. Among those include the atmosphere and environment of the classroom, "where students are most likely to acquire a strong motivation to gain new knowledge" (pg. 3).

Motivation, it seems, is a complex issue involving many things. Research by David McClelland (1961, 1985) indicates that certain people "could be characterized by their desire to be successful" (Renchler, pg. 13). These people, according to McClelland, are achievers. One finding of his research indicates that differences in how children are raised have an influence on whether or not they are motivated to achieve. Parents who emphasize "independence training and mastery" (Renchler, pg. 13), McClelland suggests, results in people who are highly motivated to achieve.

McClelland also found in his research that when parents expected achievement from their children, those children were more likely than not to live up to those expectations. In what McClelland calls "affiliation motivation", children were found to want to succeed and achieve when they received "praise for doing well from family or friends" (Renchler, pg. 13).

Self-Concepts and Motivation

Building on this concept of affiliation motivation and family praise, Renchler continues that it is in the early stages of a person's development that self-confidence is established. He states that studies have shown the important role that "significant others" play in shaping a person's self-confidence, and that this self-confidence is an important part of motivation to take chances and to achieve (pg. 15).

William J. Holly (1987) writes of student self-esteem as consisting of two components: "First, an effort is made to ensure that students feel they are noticed and liked and that people care about them. Second, students are helped to identify and develop their unique

talents, and strong reinforcement is made readily available in the form of public recognition and displays of student work".

Holly, (1987) further states that it is important to give students a clear picture of themselves and that a "positive attitude and improved study skills can enhance self-esteem by raising achievement levels". Also Holly finds that encouragement and enthusiasm on the part of the classroom teacher help a student build a sense of self and a positive self-image.

Others who have looked at student motivation to learn are Raymond J. Wlodkowski and Judith H. Jaynes in their book, Eager to Learn, Helping Children Become Motivated and Love Learning. "The relationship", they state, "between family and school is comparable to that of the right and left hemispheres of the brain. Both are necessary" (pg. xii). And also they stress that "many of the ways to encourage motivation to learn can be sensibly used in both school and home" (pg. xii). The two, state Wlodkowski and Jaynes, are really inseparable.

Researcher Carole Ames (1992) discusses the fact that "one's ability and sense of self-worth" are central to how people achieve, and that "public recognition" contributes to self-concepts. Ames and Ames (1989) look at the problem of lessening student motivation over time, stating that the more children sit in classrooms and are required to learn, the more extrinsic incentives are required. The problem is seen as "the system that necessarily constrains and standardizes their learning opportunities" (pg. 74). Offering extrinsic rewards, they

conclude, may produce the opposite effect desired, that of producing only for the reward offered.

Likewise, Judith L. Meece (1993) in explaining the theory of self-worth as it applies to their ability to achieve competitively states that "students are motivated to maximize success in school, which enhances their sense of worth" leading to achievement motivation.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Wlodkowski and Jaynes stress that "motivation to learn is a value and a desire for learning" (pg. 6). This desire to learn for the sake of learning is an intrinsic desire. Children are, they state, born with the desire to learn for learning's sake. "Preschoolers are fascinated and awestruck by the new and different in their world" (pg. 7). What, then, happens when a child goes to school and seemingly learning becomes a job and motivation to learn lessens? One theory of Wlodkowski and Jaynes is that learning becomes "formalized" in groups and that parental feedback is not constant and immediate (pg. 7). The maintaining of a desire to learn, they conclude, may depend on maintaining an attitude. "Motivation to learn is extremely vulnerable to the distractions of daily existence" (pg. 10). It is necessary, therefore, they say, that "teacher and parents join together to ensure that the desire for learning among their children is not swept away" (pg. 11). A large but essential task.

Carole Ames (1984, 1992) also looks at the "intrinsic value of learning". Ames states that if children feel that they are doing well and that they can "master" a task they are willing to try harder and to learn new things.

If one looks at Maslow's theory of human needs we find that self-actualization, or the need for a sense of personal fulfillment, is last on the list. It is not considered one of the most powerful driving forces in life. The need to achieve can be only seen as important when all our other needs, food, shelter, water, belonging socially and positive recognition from others, have been accomplished. This desire to achieve must be seen to be important before it can be achieved.

Martin V. Covington (1992) defines intrinsic motivation as "the desire (or goal) to become more effective as a person". Learning for the sake of learning must be seen as the goal if students are intrinsically motivated.

Extrinsic motivation is that which is supported by rewards, (grades, stars, trophies) or goals outside of the mere desire to learn. The difference between the two, states Covington, "is never plain or absolute" (pg. 20). They may, in fact, work together. Covington presents several examples where the two factors can work together to motivate. He notes one young man who reads avidly about nutrition, seemingly to become more healthy. In truth, he wants to become more healthy in order to promote his desire for wealth and fame as a professional basketball player. Another example cited by Covington concerns a college professor who strives for knowledge, in part, because of the desire for acknowledgement and applause received at an annual convention.

Covington's point is well taken. There are several factors involved in a child's desire, or lack of desire, to learn and achieve in school, both internal and external. In fact, it is necessary to reward

students for their achievements, to recognize their accomplishments as well as their efforts to accomplish. These rewards are necessary, Covington explains, "in order to involve them long enough so that what they learn will eventually become valued for its own sake" (pg. 21).

Schools cannot, says Covington, assure what he calls "motivational equity", that is, an equal desire in all students to learn. Schools can, he continues, encourage motivational equity by providing "all students with a common heritage in the reasons they learn" (pg. 21). All students, states Covington, no matter what their ability level, can be "caught up in the drama of problem solving, and of being poised to learn..." (pg. 21). To do this students must believe that they are capable, says Covington. If students believe they are not capable of achieving they will do what they can to avoid failure. The children of parents who encourage them from infancy to achieve will believe they can achieve. Encouraging children to explore and to try new things is important, explains Covington, in the attainment of an intrinsic motivation to learn.

Another way Covington suggests for children to become intrinsically motivated is to require students to teach others. In this way, he states, "they rehearse the material in more comprehensive ways and are more intrinsically motivated to do so" (pg. 127). This method seems to approach a heterogeneous grouping style, and although Covington does not mention this in his book directly, he does speak against ability grouping. We must, he concludes, "seek ways to celebrate and encourage the special qualities of each student while recognizing the

fact that ability differences are, after all, part of that uniqueness" (pg. 154).

One thing Covington does suggest is the importance of reducing the competitive stress environments and thus threat of failing for failure-prone students, and placing them in "less threatening achievement contexts" (pg. 128). He states that students who are prone to failure perform better in less threatening environments and may thus become more intrinsically motivated to learn.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature and research pertinent to the motivational aspects to education of audience, family, and community. These forces and their resulting influence on the children who took part in the "Kid's Talk" radio shows will be explored in further chapters.

We have seen that past research has shown these factors to be an important part of an overall successful education for all children, not simply a few. Since it is in elementary school where children are introduced and incorporated into the system through which we hopefully instill a love of education for them, it is imperative that this experience be a successful and enjoyable one. But schools cannot accomplish this alone. Kathy Gagne (1992), in her dissertation research about children and reading, points out that the home environment is a most influential one in creating role models for children to follow. Indeed, parents play a major role in preparing and sustaining an atmosphere for learning.

The next chapter shows how, working together, the community, the parents, students, and their teacher, achieved a positive and successful atmosphere for learning.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used in collecting data for this research, the setting, and the participants in the study.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methodology was used in this study. Michael Quinn Patton (1980) describes this method of inquiry as a means to "both discover what is happening and then to verify what has been discovered" (pg. 47).

Qualitative research methods provided this study with a "framework for guidance", (pg. 47) in which, as Patton describes it, the data gathering procedures are based. Each interview, each journal entry, each questionnaire, gave me a basis from which conclusions were drawn about what children were experiencing while writing their own radio shows, and and how they reacted to the experience of having an audience for their work. Parental responses to questionnaires and interviews with the classroom teacher gave me information about observations of the process from the adult perspective both inside the classroom and from the children's homes.

Qualitative research acknowledges that people have differing realities which are a function of personal interaction and perception. The beliefs and realities held are those of the participants and are interpreted through their own words and experiences. Sharan B. Merriam (1988) describes qualitative research as an exploration of those

individual beliefs and realities and how all the parts work together to form a whole.

A qualitative approach allows a researcher to look at a small part of a larger issue (Marshall, Rossman, 1989). In this case we look at one culturally diverse, heterogeneously grouped classroom, and the issue of designing curriculum which presents an audience for the students' work beyond that which is normally provided in the classroom.

Triangulation of Data

Triangulation of data, or, "bringing more than one source of data" to the questions, (Marshall, Rossman 1989, pg. 146) has been used in this study. This concept of data analysis, explain Marshall and Rossman, can be used to strengthen the researcher's findings and their usefulness in other studies. It combines different methods of gathering data, such as interviews, questionnaires, and journals as was used here to study the same question (see also Denzin, 1978, Jick, 1979, Rossman & Wilson, 1985, Mathison, 1988, Merriam, 1988).

Denzin (1970) attests that triangulation allows a combination of different research methods. Denzin also states that "The rationale for this strategy is that the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another, and by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies" (1970, pg. 308).

Initial Contact With Students

The classroom teacher, Jack, and I attended the same graduate course in education: he was aware that I had produced radio programs with children in the past. I agreed, at his request, to speak with his class about the possibility of their creating radio shows in their

classroom about the work they were doing. After approaching his class with the idea of doing their own radio shows, and with their consent, I visited their class to talk further with them about the idea.

It was during my visit to their class that the students agreed that they would do some radio shows. I talked with them about my role as the person who would help them tape record their work; then I would put together the tapes they had recorded in class, taking out all the parts that they didn't think were good enough for an audience to hear, and how I would make a final copy which would be aired on the radio station where I worked. I talked with them about their roles as writers and performers of the programs, and answered questions they had.

To determine what knowledge, if any, the participants had of radio in general, and specifically, if they listened to radio and what they listened to, group interviews were conducted at the very beginning of the study. There were two separate interviews, each consisting of half of the class at one time. I had determined that in order to gain insight into the children's knowledge of and interest (or lack of same) in radio, I would have to talk to them and ask specific questions. I felt that I could not assume that they would be familiar with AM radio and, if they were not, the interview process would be an ideal time for me to see what radio listening habits, if any, they had, and also to assess their day-to-day experience with radio.

Questions that I felt would give me the most information about the children's knowledge of radio were:

1. Do you listen to radio?
2. When do you listen to radio?

3. When do your parents listen to radio?

4. What do you listen to on the radio?

5. What do your parents listen to on the radio?

6. What do you think is the main difference between what you hear on AM radio and FM radio?

7. Do you ever listen to a different radio station than your parents?

This informal interview was intended to put the children at ease with not only me, but also with the idea of working with someone in radio. With the answers that the children gave to these questions I had a foundation upon which I could build with them their own radio programs. I could learn what their experiences with radio were and what they needed to know in order to proceed.

Preparation and Taping

The classroom teacher and I decided that we would plan on doing six programs. That allowed for enough preparation time between programs as well as time allowed for editing and final airing (approximately one show per month).

Classroom preparation included a brainstorming session with the teacher and students, called a production meeting, to decide what would be included in each program. The teacher wrote suggestions and ideas from the children on the blackboard, formulating a list from which the content of the program was chosen. This list remained available to children throughout the process of preparing a program so they could refer to it at any time.

After the content of the program had been decided on, the different categories were put on the board. Children were given choices as to what they would like to take part in. Most of the children worked together on projects in small groups of two to four. Some children wrote stories or poems individually. If a child could not decide what s/he wanted to do s/he was assigned to work with a group. In each case choices were given to all children. If they were not interested in taking part in a program, that was also a choice and other classwork was assigned by the teacher.

Students had a choice of whom they wanted to work with in a group. Indicating that he wanted this project to be "the highest interest project that they could have", the teacher let children choose their groups so they would be with people "they felt comfortable with and could work with". Children could choose to work alone but came together with a group to tape and be a part of a specific segment of a show.

Children in their respective groups worked at tables in groups in different parts of the room. Each group had a folder and paper and worked together within their groups to organize their parts.

The teacher went from group to group facilitating and giving help to those who needed it. In this way he was able to determine which groups were able to work alone and which groups needed more help. After two days of group work, which was a part of the day previously determined and set aside by the teacher, he worked directly with any group that still needed help sorting out their ideas.

After several days of putting together segments separately, children indicated to the teacher that they were done. This meant that

they had written their segment, they had read it to their partner or partners, and they were ready for Jack to read what they had done. At this point final corrections were made by the teacher and the children and the reports were put in labeled folders in their final form for taping.

In addition to these reports students also had a chance to volunteer to introduce segments such as "Now it's time for sports." Each report either opened or closed with the students giving their names.

It was now that Jack called me and we set a date when I could come to school to tape the individual segments. This usually happened within three days of Jack's phone call.

Taping was completed usually within two days. Approximately one hour was set aside during the school day when I brought a tape recorder, a hand held microphone, and cassette tapes. I met with groups in a small music room across the hall from the classroom. There were times when taping was done in the classroom, but this allowed background noise from other children to be recorded as well, and those taping were distracted. As a result, at every chance possible, I recorded in a separate room away from the classroom. In order to eliminate all possible extraneous noise from the audiotapes, children scotch taped segments of their scripts together so that no noise was created by turning and moving papers.

Under ideal conditions I recorded segments of the show in the order that they would be heard. If sometimes someone was absent, or some

other mishap had occurred, segments were recorded out of the order in which they would be heard in the final program.

After I recorded all of the segments of the program, I took the cassette tape to the radio station for preparation for airing. To do this I first re-recorded the segments from the cassette tape onto a larger seven inch reel of tape, noting the order in which the segments had been recorded. When this was done edited the segments, from the seven inch reel, into the order in which they would be heard on the program.

Editing for this research was done by listening to the tape, separating the taped segments with a razor blade, then putting together the parts with a special tape called splicing tape in the order they should be for final airing. Students many times indicated to me while we were taping that they were not happy with what they had done and asked could I please take that part out of the program. They then recorded their part again. At other times mistakes I edited out consisting of mispronounced words, sneezes, coughs, or sometimes mumbled words that, after listening to what they had taped, children decided they wanted to do over.

The editing process took me, usually, three to four hours in a recording studio at the radio station.

When the final editing was completed the radio station's program director and I decided when the program would be broadcast. Programs were aired usually within a few days of the final editing, and were heard on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm. This time was judged by the classroom teacher, myself, and the children and parents as suitable for

family listening time. Jack decided to play each program in class for students to be sure that everyone heard the programs.

Program Content

The First Program

To illustrate what was included in the programs, the following gives a description of the first program prepared by the children. This program revolved around their classroom science unit on crayfish. The entire program was devoted to how they raised the crayfish in a pool set up in their classroom, and how, after studying them and giving them names, they made small rafts and released them into a river behind their school.

This initial program for the children allowed them, and their teacher, to discover what making radio programs was all about and actually what they could accomplish.

To open this show, and all subsequent shows, the students recorded, with the help of their teacher and also the school's music teacher, a theme song. This song, only about thirty seconds in length, was heard at the beginning and end of each program. The lyrics were a repetition of the name of the show,"Kid's Talk", which the children had chosen, and accompanied by piano played by the music teacher.

To begin the program one student introduced herself, welcomed listeners to the show, and explained what the program was about. Following this, several students introduced themselves and then explained what their crayfish unit involved, how they named their crayfish, put identifying marks on their shells, and how each student had responsibility for his/her own crayfish.

Adhering to the basic understanding of the research that programs be written and performed by students, each wrote his or her own script and took a turn giving more information about the project. One student explained how the project involved math because students had to weigh and measure the crayfish. Another student explained how the class studied the crayfish's natural environment and experimented to discover what they liked to eat. One student's crayfish liked tuna fish. They also explained how they studied anatomy of crayfish and how crayfish used their pincers to catch and eat food. This gave each child, as Donald Graves (1991) explains, "a place and a purpose in the total fabric" of the project. Graves concludes, "It starts with establishing places for individuals, then includes the room, and, finally, goes beyond to the community" (pg. 39).

Following this segment several students then described how they made individual rafts for their crayfish and released them one chilly fall morning into the river behind their school. A unique part of the program was the "Crayfish Point of View" segment where students wrote about the experience of being released into the river from their crayfish's point of view.

To end the program they wrote a rap song sung to the music of a popular tune at the time. Their song was titled "We Will, We Will Miss You". After this the fifteen minute program ended with the theme "Kid's Talk". This first program was the only one that was built around only one subject.

Preparation for the second program, as with all subsequent programs (see Appendix E for a listing of programs two through six),

began immediately following the end of the one before. This was done so that children would come to feel at ease with doing the radio shows and being heard on radio. The teacher felt that the more students became at ease with the process, the better the results would be.

The Radio Station

Since the 1940's it has been a part of the Federal Communications Commission licensing procedure of all radio stations that they provide a certain amount of programming free of charge (no advertising) to the public. It is because of this that radio stations are willing to air educational and informational programming for the public.

Data Sources

The Journals

The use of journals kept by the participants in this study allowed me to gather the children's own words on how they felt about being on the radio. As Patton (1980) explains, this type of qualitative data provides researchers with direct quotations about experiences, attitudes and thoughts of the study participants (see also Merriam, 1988). From these journals I took entire passages which illustrate and reflect on the experiences of the participants. I also looked for similar patterns of word usage which reflected commonly expressed ideas and feelings of the students.

The Questionnaires

Questionnaires, (Appendix B) given to students and parents, were used in this study in order to provide the researcher with interpretative data from open ended responses from students and their families about personal reactions to being on radio, and parents'

observations of their children's reactions to hearing themselves and their classmates on radio.

From this data, as described in Patton (1980), I gathered the students' basic perceptions about themselves academically, and about the role of radio in their lives. The students' answers to questions about how they saw themselves as readers and writers, both before and after the study, allowed me to gain insight about the students' own feelings and self-analyses. I compared students' answers from these numbered questionnaires given before and after the study to determine if there were any changes in their opinions of themselves as readers and writers.

From reading how parents describe the event of hearing their child on the radio on the parent questionnaires (Appendix D), I gathered another perspective, that of the family, which was an integral part of this study (see also Marshall & Rossman, 1989, Belson, 1982, Jick, 1979, and Sudman and Bradburn, 1982). I examined parent's responses on these questionnaires grouping them into categories reflecting similar emotions they witnessed from their children, as well as verbal and emotional responses to listening to the radio programs with parents, relatives, and friends.

The Interviews

I conducted two interviews with the classroom teacher to obtain information about events surrounding the planning of the programs that I could only gather from the person who was in the classroom on a day-to-day basis, and who worked directly with the children to organize the children's roles in the radio shows. These interviews, one conducted directly after the programs were completed, and another some time later

in order to gain additional information about how the programs evolved, were examined to find out what his experiences were with the children during the planning of the programs. The teacher's answers were grouped into categories which reflected how the programs were conceived and written; how the teacher saw the children benefitting from creating the programs; and how this process differed from the teacher's normal curriculum and classroom routine. As Patton (1980) explains, the interview is intended to find out things from others that we cannot directly observe ourselves.

I conducted separate interviews with five children after the programs were completed. The purpose was to obtain further and deeper reflections and reactions to specific incidents that the children had experienced.

The interviews were of a semi-structured nature described in Merriam (1988) as being guided by a list of questions and issues to explore. This format allowed me to examine with the interviewees any views that came up in the course of conversation. These interviews were analyzed for students' similar reactions to the experience of writing, reading, and performing for an audience. These interviews were also examined to obtain students' insights to the process and experience of having a radio audience for their school work.

Further explanation of the importance of the interview to qualitative research can be found in Merriam (1988) as the process gathering information about past events, or to determine how people (in this case the classroom teacher) describe and "interpret the world around them" (pg. 72) (see also Marshall & Rossman, 1989, Bevis, 1950,

Caplow, 1956, Converse, 1974, Gorden, 1981, Kahn and Cannell, 1957, Mishler, 1986, Sudman and Bradburn, 1982).

Research Population and Setting

The Participants

The population for this research consists of one fourth grade class of twenty-one students. The class is multicultural and heterogeneously grouped, and consists of thirteen girls and eight boys. The fourth grade age group (nine to ten years old) is a familiar age group to me as I have done radio shows with children before in age groups ranging from kindergarten through sixth grade. The format of the programs is flexible enough to allow for all elementary age level groups.

Cultural origins of the class are as follows:

Two children are of Hispanic origins; English is their primary language.

Two children are of Asian origins, and one of those children speaks Chinese as his primary language.

One child is of African American heritage.

One child is of British origin, whose country of birth is England.

The fifteen remaining students are caucasian, born in the United States, and of Judeo-Christian heritage.

There are four students in the class who are reading below their grade level.

The teacher is a veteran classroom teacher with fourteen years teaching experience in elementary schools. After teaching previously in

urban school systems, this is his first year in a rural school system, and his first attempt at using radio as a teaching technique.

The Setting

A public elementary school in western New England, grades K through six, with an enrollment of 600 students, is chosen as the site for this research. The school is one of four elementary schools, one junior high and one high school in the town. The elementary schools are local with the junior and high schools being regional. This particular school building, on one floor, is set back from the street. Behind the school is a large grassy playground on to which classroom doors open.

Classrooms in the school are grouped two to a large room, separated by seven foot high dividers, allowing sound to travel easily from one class to another. This gave the classroom a feeling of openness: however, one was constantly aware of the class on the other side of the divider. Children seemed comfortable with this arrangement. The classroom was well lighted and had large windows looking out on the playground.

The school was determined by myself and the teacher to be the most natural setting for audiotaping the students' radio programs, instead of transporting them to the radio station some ten miles from the school. The format of the programs included classroom work, and the children would feel more at home in their own school where the work was being done. Several research works by Dale (1959, 1969, 1972) detail the use of audiotaping in the classroom to enhance curriculum (see also McKenna, 1993, ACT, 1984, Mee, 1970, Craggs, 1992). The programs were begun in late fall and continued to the spring.

The Town

The population of the town, approximately 35,000, ranges from those with advanced college degrees to those with high school educations, and the class reflects this diversity. Some children's parents work in professional positions at the local university while others' parents are blue collar workers with high school degrees.

The town's main source of income is tied directly to the university where many townspeople work in support positions in offices or maintenance. Several farms exist in the area while some, giving way to increasing land taxes and operating costs, have been sold to land developers.

Summary

In this chapter I have presented a description of the methodology used in the research. One of the "Kid's Talk" programs was described in detail in terms of how it was written and produced, and how the process of creating the series of six radio programs developed in the classroom. We have looked at the population of the study, and the setting in which it took place.

The systematic analysis of the qualitative data which follows in Chapter IV, as included in each description of the data collection instruments, represents an attempt to determine how having an audience for their work affected the students involved. These data will be looked at also for any educational benefits derived from children writing and presenting radio shows to the public, and also to determine children's and parents' reactions to these programs.

CHAPTER IV

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Data Collection

Letters of permission describing the intent of the research were sent home to parents and guardians of each child (Appendix A) that insured the right of each parent to decide whether or not they wanted their child to participate. All children in the class did participate in at least one program.

Questionnaires

Before the programs began each child filled out a numbered pre-study questionnaire. (Appendix B) Children were told by their teacher that the questionnaires were anonymous, that they need not put their names on them, and that they should be completely honest with their answers. Questions asked children to rate themselves as readers and writers, and about their radio listening habits. These questionnaires were put aside for later comparison with post-study questionnaires (Appendix C) containing the same questions. Children were given the same numbered questionnaire each time.

Questionnaires were sent home to parents, after the final program was heard, (Appendix D) for the purpose of getting their impressions and reactions to their child creating radio programs and being heard on the radio. These questionnaires were sent back to the classroom teacher by parents; he then put them in one large envelope for me to collect. This was an important part of the overall study data because of the integral part parents played in the research. I analyzed the parent's feedback for their comment on their children's reactions to creating the programs

from a different perspective than that of the children or their teacher, but that of the parent. This added vital data from outside of the classroom.

Journals

Anonymous journals were kept by the students throughout the study to give them a chance to put into writing how they felt about the experience of creating radio shows. These were sometimes given as a homework assignment. Other times they were written in class. They were collected on a regular basis by the classroom teacher, put in an envelope and set aside for me.

Teacher and Student Interviews

After the study was completed I conducted two separate interviews with the classroom teacher on audiotape to get his professional opinion on the educational value to students of their creating their own radio shows; also I wanted to discover details of how the programs were constructed by the children and himself, along with the day-to-day happenings in his class over the six-month period.

During the course of the interviews I listened for key phrases and anecdotes in order to follow up that information with further questions. These interviews were then transcribed with pertinent information about day-to-day class incidents while preparing the radio programs gleaned for analysis.

This same method was followed during my interviews with five students who took part in the programs. In each case I had prepared questions before the sessions. These questions were open ended and allowed for children and myself to explore their answers further and

also to follow up on any ideas that came up in the course of conversation.

Pre- and Post-Study Questionnaires

Information gathered from the pre- and post-study questionnaires, (see Appendices B and C) as stated in chapter three, was in part a means for myself to ascertain what the children knew about radio and, in the case of the pre-study questionnaires, what they needed to know before we began the study. A few of the questions posed, however, were intended to measure any differences in how the children viewed themselves as writers to see if their views changed at all after they had been involved in writing their own radio shows. I was also interested in seeing if they felt their abilities as readers changed at all after they had heard themselves, and knew that others had heard them read on the radio.

From the children who responded to both questions before and after the study, out of twenty-one total questionnaires, nine of the responses to "How do you rate yourself as a writer?" changed positively on the post-study questionnaire. One student's response changed from "fair, (I hate to write)" to "good".

Another student indicated "fair" on the first questionnaire, "I'm a so so writer." That student also changed to "good" after the study.

The remaining twelve respondents had no change in their view of themselves as writers. None of the students' opinions of themselves as writers changed for the worse after the study.

From those sixteen students who answered "How do you rate yourself as a reader?" on both questionnaires, six changed their answers

positively. Three students changed their answers from "good" to "very good". Two students changed their answers from "fair" to "good", and one student's answer changed from "fair" to "very good."

The rest of the students responding to the question of both questionnaires had no change in their answers. Three students answered "very good" on both questionnaires: the remaining seven students answered "good" on both questionnaires.

Evidence suggests students were aware that they were being listened to by an audience. However, answers the children gave to a question about how they felt about being on radio and being heard by other people were inconclusive as to how they were affected by having an audience for their work. The overwhelming response was "I felt embarrassed." This statement was qualified by other feelings such as "It was a fun, good experience." These were emotional responses to the question; conclusions about audience were not able to be drawn from the children's answers.

One student's response reflects the fact that although their voices and names were heard, visual recognition was not a part of being on radio,

> I felt embarrassed about being on the radio, but since people could not know who I was, so I guess it was a fun, good experience.

Another student revealed some skepticism as to whether or not there was actually an audience for the shows.

> I felt embarrassed sometimes and I felt that nobody listens to it.

The children, as a regular part of the programs, always gave their names at the beginning, and most always at the end of all segments as well. The fact that there was no visual recognition of the children, as the above excerpts demonstrate, allowed them a certain kind of privacy. Although names were mentioned, faces were not revealed to the public.

Several other students wrote about an awareness of audience and of being listened to.

One entry reads,

> I liked people to hear me on the radio and I think it was a very good experience for us.

And another states,

> It was a lot of fun. It was a little embarrassing listening to myself with someone. I'd like to do it again.

Another student adds,

> It was embarrassing being on the radio with people listening with me.

And another says,

> I liked it, but when I was taping I felt embarrassed because everyone could hear me.

These responses indicate an awareness of different types of audience. Statements such as "I liked people to hear me...", "listening to myself...", and "people listening with me", demonstrate the children's awareness of at least two audiences. One, the audience of the self, and two, other people as audience.

Students continuously acknowledge two emotions in their post-questionnaires that can be interpreted as conflicting. The above responses indicate this, as does the following:

> I thought it was embarrassing hearing myself on the radio. I mean a lot of people are listening to it. I really liked being on the radio.

In my experience as a professional broadcaster I have had people say many times that they wondered if there actually were people listening to their broadcast. The thought that people are actually listening to what you say is sometimes unbelievable since there is no visible audience. The teacher, as is explored in the post-study interview, did remind students on a regular basis that there was an audience, that what they were writing and reading would be heard in the community, and that they should keep this in mind.

There are some very positive responses about being on radio. These entries reflect an overall enthusiasm for the programs. One entry reads,

> Kid's Talk was a great experience. It helped me be open to share my feelings. If I could do it again I would.

This entry was written by a student who had done a report on how a special holiday was celebrated by her family. She had taken a couple of days to prepare the report and is expressing here how she felt about this.

Another student adds,

> I felt good to be on the radio because I thought I was a star to be on the radio.

And another says,

> It felt neat to hear me on the radio. I felt like a star.

Expressing the feeling of being a "star" by these children is interesting in that media "stars" are people who are recognized by the

public for what they have accomplished in media. It is a positive expression of recognition and accomplishment.

One student expresses relief about the fact that the shows would be edited before they were aired. That student writes,

> It was a really good experience, I didn't feel nervous knowing whatever I said could be erased.

This entry shows that children were aware that they could, when taping, elect to eliminate from the final show any part of what s/he had taped. Each child, when taping, was allowed to listen to what they had taped, and if they chose to, they could request to eliminate from the final show a part of what they had done, or they could tape over again any part of what they had taped. No one was forced to air something they didn't want to. This was done to insure that children would understand that this was their program and that they would have the right to eliminate parts that they felt were not done well.

There were a few students who had negative feelings about being on the radio. One responds,

> It is embarrassing. I think I was bad.

Another responds,

> I felt kind of embarrassed about my lines. I didn't really like it.

One student writes,

> I didn't feel good at all about hearing myself. The mike made me sound like a real jerk. I felt embarrassed when my parents heard me.

These responses exhibit a self-criticism that was unusual in the class. There was an overall feeling of shyness and embarrassment in the children's statements about knowing that they were being heard by both

people they knew and people they did not know. Yet, most of the answers the students gave were positive about, 1. being on radio and, 2. knowing that others outside of the classroom were listening to them, which was a fact that they were constantly being made aware of by their teacher. These "others" were perceived by the children as not only family members, but, in general, people who listen to radio.

These responses from the children are not detailed. When a child said s/he was embarrassed or had fun, no specific reason was given. However, it is interesting to read their reactions to something they had not done before. An overall negative response would have made completing the programs difficult.

A series of words and phrases came up in children's responses on a regular basis. Words such as "good" and "neat" were a regular part of responses, and suggest that this was a positive experience for them. Phrases used commonly include "I liked it", "It was fun" and, "I felt good".

Post-Study Student Interviews

Interviews were conducted with five children who took part in the majority of the programs. These interviews, conducted after they had had some time to reflect on their experience, were held with three girls and two boys. They were informal and left room for the children to elaborate on specific questions I asked, and also allowed me to follow any topic of significance that came up during the conversations.

I began by asking if they felt there was any difference in the writing they did for their radio shows than what they might do for their

regular classwork. Much of their responses focused on the children's awareness of a radio audience.

One student answers,

> You had to make it, like, more understanding 'cause your classmates, and your peers can understand you fine, but you know you're talking to people on the radio and they've gotta be able to know what you mean so you have to revise it...make it good.

This child states,

> I think I did it a little better, 'cause, like, I knew I was gonna be on the radio and I didn't want to embarrass myself so I made it better because of that.

Another says,

> I think it made me a better writer 'cause I would think about what I was writing and reading too because I knew people were gonna hear this so I would speak as clearly as I could.

This last child has combined three different aspects of his involvement in the programs. He speaks about being a better writer, thinking about reading and writing, and speaking clearly so his audience would understand what he was saying.

This student says about writing for a radio audience,

> (I) Probably (wrote) a little better, 'cause...just because...working to be on the radio you improve your skills 'cause you know it's gonna be on the radio and you want to do better, so you write better and then you learn more things.

I asked some children to speak specifically about if they thought their reading was improved by knowing people would be listening to what they said.

This student remarks,

> A little bit, because before you would just write it out and everybody'd be able to understand it, and even if you were slow they didn't mind. But on the radio you had to get it across really easily, and everything, so it was better so you could read it better.

One of the important factors of this research was that, keeping audience in mind, some of the work that students did for the radio shows was different from what they had done before. For instance, some children, for the news section of the programs, took clippings from newspapers and rewrote them for the program. I asked children how this was different from what they normally did for school.

One answers,

> Well, in school we'd like bring stuff in from home and do all these little papers and stuff. But instead of bringing it in from home, instead of taking it from your house and everything, you'd take it from the newspaper; and we had to rewrite it so kids could understand it.

The rewriting process was an integral part of what the children did for the programs. I asked children how they checked their work for airing on the radio.

This child says,

> Well, you would rewrite for school, but you had to, like, have somebody check it, so you can read it on the radio and not have so many screw ups, so you had to do it again and again. You know, you always checked it more thoroughly for the radio than you did for school.

I asked to have the process explained further.

She continues,

> Well, if you write something you would re-check it a couple of times, see how you liked it with your partner. Then Mr. _____ would check it.

This student adds another thought on the system,

> We shared each other's pieces for the radio then we both went to Mr. _____.

This partnership was a procedure instituted by the teacher specifically for doing the radio shows. I called it a three point checking system. This system is discussed further in the interview with the classroom teacher.

An important question to the study was that of how hard the students tried and what kind of effort they put into the programs knowing they had an audience.

One answers,

> In a way you want to do a better job than you usually do, 'cause when you're in class, you know, your peers and your teacher, they know what kind of person you are, but when you're on the radio they only hear you for a certain amount of time, they don't get to know you so you gotta do a little better than you usually do. You try your best.

I asked the children to explain how this materialized besides their trying to write or read better.

This student reveals,

> Well, I can remember asking you to, (when we were audiotaping segments) like, no, no, I don't like the way that sounded. Please go back and do it again. 'Cause people were going to be hearing you on the radio and you wanted to sound the best you could.

Another student adds,

> Sometimes, like when people were going 'um, um', 'cause they couldn't read it and they were getting frustrated, and that's when they wanted to do it over again; like 'what are people gonna think of me if I mess up?'

Another way this attention to detail manifested itself was in how the children conducted themselves during the taping of the programs. When they discovered how noisy paper can be when they turned it over to read something they had written on the other side, they decided to write their scripts on only one side of the paper, and also to tape their scripts together so there would be no shuffling of paper heard on the audio tapes.

The children decided early in the process that there was also too much background noise because the programs were tape recorded in the classroom while other children were doing other things besides the radio programs. As a result the taping was moved across the hall to a small music room where program segments were tape recorded with no chance of interruption or extraneous noise.

Students also became very aware of how their segments sounded and often, after listening to what they had just taped, asked if they could retape their part in order to make it sound better. I allowed them to do this whenever they wanted to change something. However, I also encouraged them to accept what they had done as being good.

I questioned the children about how they felt after the programs were finished and if they had any sense of accomplishment after doing the shows, knowing that there was an audience for their work.

One answers,

> Ya, you know, 'cause your satisfaction of being, like, on the radio and people were listening to us, you know, and that only happens to grown ups.

Another states,

> It made me feel like I was doing something that people liked and it made me feel good. We wanted to make it good.

And another,

> I think I felt better about my writing 'cause I knew people liked the shows, and we won first place, and we had a really good time, so I think it was good.

This student remembers being personally recognized for being on radio,

> ...we got a chance to be on the radio and, you know, people do listen to us. People did tell me I listened to your radio show.

Another corroborates audience awareness, even though the audience is made up of people she doesn't know,

> Well, it's still fun, 'cause you're making a show and they will be able to hear it.

There was a certain pride evident in these children as they related their stories to me. Statements such as "people do listen to us" were emphasized by hand gestures and facial expressions highlighted by smiles and laughter.

Another student answers a question about being nervous with an audience for his work,

> ...not so much nervous, it's just that sometimes, you know, you felt older 'cause people are listening to my radio show with my classmates.

These students were able to express their feelings about doing the radio shows. Not all the children were able to do this. These children talk about "satisfaction", "I was doing something that people liked", and "I knew people liked the shows". With these thoughts these children have acknowledged that what they had done was good, both for the audience and for them.

The reference to winning "first place" indicates how good that student felt about winning the first place award for children's programs from the Massachusetts Broadcasters' Association.

Two students were able to answer the question of what they felt they learned because of doing the programs. Their awareness of their audience is very evident.

One student refers to audience here,

> Maybe that the writing you did wasn't always for yourself...um, probably made me more confident in what you wrote 'cause lots of people were gonna hear it.

Another says,

> I think I learned that I can do things and they can come out really good and people will like them.

And another student reflects,

> ...it was kinda a reward at the end having it put on the radio.

This student reacts briefly to my question about how he felt about being heard by people he didn't know:

> (I was) pretty nervous, but I was kinda proud and I felt lucky that I had gotten to do this.

These children were able to talk about their feelings and about what they learned. They made positive statements reflecting a feeling of accomplishment. There are several positive statements reflecting the students' awareness of their audience and how this affected their work.

Journal Entries

During the taping of the programs children kept journals on a weekly basis, usually written after the taping of programs: reflected in their journals were the immediate reactions of students to taping programs and what they felt about being involved in creating their own radio shows. Children were asked to respond and give reactions to taping and preparing the programs, as well as, after hearing themselves on the air, describing their feelings about being on the radio.

Some of the journal entries reflect a definite reaction to having an audience for their work. Reactions are in the form of "family as audience", "self as audience", and "other people as audience" unknown to the journal writer. Many of the journal entries, however, were inconclusive as to children's reactions to having an audience for their work.

For future studies of this nature I would plan to keep a tighter control of how journal entries were written and reflections by children made in them. Setting aside a specific time in class to write in reflective journals, with children being asked to think about specific questions, would most likely have resulted in more in-depth journal entries.

I grouped these journal entries into categories that reflect certain emotions expressed by students. These categories were compiled

according to dominant phrases and words that the children used when writing.

The first category I used was "Fun". This word was used in these journal entries to describe what they had experienced.

The entries read,

> I thought it was fun because it was funny watching people speak on the radio.

Another says,

> I thought the tape was exciting and fun. I liked hearing the tape after I talked.

One student writes,

> Everybody had to take turns on the radio program. We had different groups for the radio. I was in the interview group. It was fun because it was my first time on radio.

And another writes,

> I was shy but had fun.

Even though the students were novices at being in the public eye they looked forward to doing other programs and were wiling to try it again. This evidence of wanting to continue, to do more shows, is expressed in other journal entries later in this chapter. It is fair to say that if this enthusiasm were not evident in the children's attitudes, we would not have continued with the programs.

The next category I have included is "Embarrassed". This is a word that comes up often in children's responses to what they were experiencing. The classroom teacher, although he could not verify what had happened outside of class, indicated that no discussion about what

was written in the children's journals came up in class. Similar feelings expressed by students were spontaneous.

One student writes,

> It was my first time hearing the whole thing, and it was embarrassing. I felt embarrassed.

Another writes,

> During the taping of my crayfish point of view story my face felt like it was on fire and I was burning hot. I was very embarrassed that I was the only one talking and only my voice is going to be on the radio at that time.

This student reflects,

> Today I felt embarrassed because I had to talk in the mike. Everybody had to take turns on the radio program. It was more embarrassing because everyone was watching me.

Feeling embarrassed about being heard in a public forum is not an unusual response. Adults often feel this way about speaking in public, even if they are used to the idea and have done it many times before. Being embarrassed and expressing this shows that these children have a sense of themselves in relation to the rest of the world. However, as suggested by Stevenson and Carr (1993) children need recognition from peers, parents and teachers to develop a sense of success. By deciding to continue with the programs even though embarrassed, as one student put it, "If I could do more I would", these children are growing in their expectations of themselves and the success they will achieve, and show a willingness to try again.

Another recurrent theme I found in children's journals was "Good". This student writes,

> I felt good about the show.

Another entry reads,

> I felt funny and good, and I felt good because I was on the radio, and I have never been on the radio before.

Another writes,

> I thought it was pretty good for the first show. My family said it was good.

These children have expressed a feeling of satisfaction about what they have accomplished by being on radio. I also see in their writing an anticipation of doing more shows. "It was pretty good for the first show", suggests that the student thinks the next one will be better.

Some children who were not in the first program also expressed what they felt about hearing the programs.

One student writes,

> I felt good because I was not on the radio and I didn't embarrass myself. I thought like I wanted to be on the radio. I liked what I heard.

Another writes,

> I imagine that others felt embarrassed but I wasn't on the first show. It was neat though. I suppose I felt a little left out.

All of the students eventually took part in at least one program. It was, however, interesting to read what these two children had to say about feeling "left out", or thought that they "wanted to be on the radio", after watching the others take part. This was an important indication that the interest and curiosity level of all the students was high, even the ones who at first were just watching. There were three students who took part in all six programs. While the radio shows were

being prepared, students who did not want to participate in a particular program were provided with other curriculum materials.

There was one student who expressed some fear. This was a "scared" entry.

> I was sort of scared 'cause at the beginning I started and messed up, and when the microphone was in my face I was scared. I thought she was going to record over it. But she just told me to keep on going.

This was not the only student who was scared to be taped knowing that s/he would be heard by many people, but this was one who expressed his/her fear. While taping I encouraged children to continue, even if they made mistakes. If the programs were to succeed for the children, they had to be encouraged to do as well as they could on as many programs as they wanted.

There were two entries in the "critique" category. The first states,

> I thought it wasn't too good in the crayfish rap. It wasn't good because after almost all the verses we came in late, and not together.

Another states,

> I thought it was great, but I do think that some people like me don't sound good on radio. I think they went over parts that were wrong and put the gap together.

By saying, "they went over parts that were wrong and put the gap together", I'm sure the student was talking about editing. The fact that any goofs would be edited out was made clear when we were taping the programs. I felt it was important to make the children the most at ease as possible so they would continue to be spontaneous at all times.

If they were too nervous about making mistakes I thought this would detract from the programs overall.

The self-criticism was an essential part of the research as it indicates the children knew they could do better, and would try to do better the next time. Here we see children listening to themselves and deciding where and how they can do a better job.

There were a few entries in the "Happy" category that read,

> I felt happy because it was my first radio show I've ever had. I thought it was pretty good for the first show.

One student writes,

> How I felt? I felt happy.

And another says,

> I felt happy because it was my first radio show I've ever had.

These children have evidently experienced some satisfaction with the programs and their part in the production. By indicating "it was my first radio show", this child indicates a willingness to doing others.

The largest category I found in the children's journals was one that included an "Awareness of Family Listening". In this category children write about how they felt when they knew their family was listening to them.

One student writes,

> When my mom heard only the song she really liked it a lot because she was clapping with the song. I'm going to write down what some people said: 'Oh my god is your class on the radio that you told us about? Is that you? You're fabulous, you're fantastic on the radio! You were great on that radio!' The people who listened to it was

> my mom, my sister and my mom's guest's little kid.

This student was one of those who took part in every program. There was obviously a great deal of support from home for her participation.

Another remembers,

> We turned on the radio about five minutes early and my brother was like, 'This isn't happening!' I was saying, "That's my crayfish,' and pointing out little things.

Another writes,

> I thought that I wouldn't like it, but I did like it. Me and my mom listened and my mom said it was great.

One student combines different emotions and perceptions about having both "family" and "self" as an audience in this journal entry.

> I was very excited when I heard myself speak. My mom thought it was interesting and that some people spoke too fast. My grandma enjoyed it and she thought the children spoke well. My sister didn't say anything. She was probably jealous. My mom, sister, grandma and me listened to it.

One thoughtful entry reads,

> I was red hot when I was talking on the radio. At the end my mom said, 'That was excellent!'. And my brother said, 'I think it's good to actually have kids talk on the radio." My mom and my brother listened to it. My brother and mom both smiled when I talked alone.

Another entry reads,

> My mom loved it, she loved everybody. My mom and me listened to it and my dad didn't get to hear it. My mom said she loved it and it was great because I kept asking her and because it's true!

This student talks about family reaction,

> I listened at my house and I taped it. My grandmother had to hear it when she was over. She said I sounded very grown up. It made me feel proud of myself and I felt good about myself once again. My mom heard the tape and said I sounded very grown up, just like what my granny said.

In this last entry the student shares feelings of being "proud" about the fact that his/her family was listening to their show, and that they had turned on the radio for that expressed reason. Another writes of being "very excited" about hearing him/herself speak, and another writes that "me and my mom listened." By remembering and noting details of family reactions these children indicate that this was a good experience for them.

Throughout many of the children's journal entries the perception of their family listening is evident. It is important to note here that the uppermost feeling for these children was that their families heard what they had done, that they had listened together, given feedback and approval, and that that had made both the children and their families proud.

The next category I isolated in the children's entries was that of an "Awareness of Audience." This entry expresses such an awareness:

> I think the radio program is really cool and I'm glad that I'm speaking on it. It's cool because it is really neat to be on the radio and have hundreds of people hear you.

This entry reads,

> Today was awesome! Finally I started the first episode of Kid's Talk. I was doing expectations of what we would be doing. Well, that's the first show! We'll be doing it the entire year.

> So listen for us on Wednesday at 6:15 on WHMP AM 1400 on your dial.

This is another student who took part in every program. His enthusiasm was evidenced at each of the tapings as his voice was easily heard in any group. He was always animated, lively, and eager to do more than he was assigned. His entry reflects eagerness to promote the programs to an audience and to explain his part. After taping one of the programs I recall him asking, "When are we going to do the next show?"

Another student recalls the experience of taping,

> I didn't think Kathy was taping because she said, 'Let's try it.' I thought she was saying this to see how we reacted on radio. She probably did this because we would be frightened if we knew that we were really on radio.

Several times while taping the first program children would ask me if the tape recorder was running. This entry demonstrates my initial attempts to put children at ease with the tape recorder. This student is also correct in assuming that I thought some would be afraid of microphones and radio programs.

In the following entries students talk about being their own audience, hearing their voices on radio, and their reactions later in the process of doing the programs.

One student writes,

> I thought that the show was neato! And I like the theme song we made up, it was very fun. I like listening to the radio. It's fun to hear yourself on the radio. I like being on the radio.

Another writes,

> It was strange hearing myself on the radio. I felt very embarrassed because I thought everybody would laugh at me.

This student says,

> I really like being on the radio so far. One thing I hate about taping myself is that when I hear it over on the radio my voice sounds very different.

Another student writes,

> I think that my voice sounds much more different than my normal voice. But I wish that the station had come in clear rather than staticy.

This student is reacting to the fact that AM radio signals can often become full of interference, or static, during the evening hours. This is because the AM radio signal is transmitted from Earth to the ionosphere, then bounces back to the ground and is picked up by AM radio receivers. The static occurs when there is electrical interference in the atmosphere causing the signal to become slightly erratic.

The students above are also reacting to hearing their own voices on radio and how they are listening carefully at what they have said and how they sound.

Parents' Responses

It was evident to me from the literature I reviewed on the importance of parents taking an interest in their child's schooling to that child's success in school, that I must obtain from parents their reactions to the programs and their child's involvement. Parental involvement in a child's schooling has been shown to make a significant difference in how well a child does. Much of the research in Chapter II

demonstrates this to be true. Studies done by Sprague (1993), Clark, Lotto, and MacCarthy (1980), and Flemming (1988), among many others, stress the importance of parental involvement.

After all the programs were completed, questionnaires were sent to the parents or guardians of all children taking part. Although the answers were varied in length and complexity, there are a number of themes that were consistent throughout all of their responses.

Twenty one questionnaires were sent home to parents and all twenty one were returned. Of those twenty one questionnaires, nineteen parents indicated that they listened to at least one program. Thirteen parents indicated that they listened to three or more of the six programs.

Fifteen out of nineteen indicated that they had listened to the programs together with their child, and nine of those indicated that there was also another adult listening with them. In answer to the question of what relation the other adult listening was to the student, seven indicated the listeners were parents, four indicated there were other relatives there (this included grandmothers, aunts and adult brothers or sisters), and four indicated there were also adult friends of the family listening with them.

When asked to indicate if they felt this was a "positive" or "not positive" experience, nineteen responded that they felt that doing the radio programs was a positive experience for the students.

Of the two questionnaires returned indicating they had not listened to the programs, one response indicated they felt the programs were a waste of time, and the other indicated no response.

One of the dominant themes indicated in parents' responses was that of "excitement". When asked to describe their child's reactions to hearing the programs one parent responded,

> Very excited. She told lots of other family and friends to listen and was eager to explain all the details of making the programs.

Another explains,

> Reactions were initially great excitement and anticipation.

And another parent writes,

> She was excited to hear herself and classmates on the radio.

Other reactions include,

> He was very excited to hear his voice on radio.

One parent writes,

> She was excited and pointed out her places and her friends voices.

And,

> She was excited and explained to me problems around making certain parts.

These parents are seeing an excitement in their children about being recognized for what they have done. Their children have gone so far as to point out specific parts and problems involved in making the shows. It is evident that most parents listened to the program(s) with their children and noted specific reactions.

An element of their child's participation that parents are witnessing here is involvement. These children seem very drawn in and a part of what they are doing. They have made an investment in the programs and are inviting their parents and friends to recognize this

and join in. As one parent put it, "she was generally engaged and a part of it."

Another dominant theme among the parents' responses was that of "Pride". Several parents wrote of feelings of pride in their children when listening to themselves on radio.

One response reads,

> He was proud and delighted.

This parent indicates,

> He was proud at hearing his own voice, and was able to identify individual voices, which surprised me.

Another writes,

> She was proud, wanted to talk about it, to tell about making it.

And another,

> He seemed proud of the programs, was eager to explain all the details of making the programs.

These last three responses indicate the eagerness of these children to bring their parents into the process by telling them how the programs were done, to get them involved in more than just listening.

There were a few responses that indicated that some children had become, after the first few programs, somewhat critical of themselves and telling their parents how the shows could become better. This, I believe, is indicative of a level of growth and awareness of the overall picture of creating a program, putting it together, presenting it to and sharing it with the public.

One parent writes,

> Over time she became less embarrassed and more confident and critical about content and presentation of the programs.

Another responds,

> He was interested in the topics covered and the process behind the finished product.

In these responses the parents are relating that their children have gone beyond the surface response of 'I'm on the radio', to a deeper understanding of what it takes to create the product. They have recognized in their children a kind of "professional" response to their work and how they can make the programs better. Another aspect noted by the parents of their children's responses is that they are concerned with the content of the programs. These parents are relating a critical response in their children to "content and presentation of programs." This indicates a thoughtful caring and concern about program content, and their roles in making them better.

These responses also indicate, as researchers Rubin and O'Looney (1990) were suggesting in Chapter II, that children wanted to make their product better because of an awareness of an audience for their work.

One of the questions to parents was whether they saw any educational benefits to the programs. The answers were overwhelmingly positive. Here, again, several themes dominated the responses. Among the themes was that of "Awareness" of the world outside of the classroom.

One parent writes,

> I was amazed at the scope of subjects covered and at the children's awareness of issues in the world today.

Another says,

> It involved intergenerational work, current events.

And,

> This was a wonderful worldly experience.

Here parents are seeing their children becoming involved in the larger world outside of the classroom, thinking about what's going on in the world, writing about it and, most important I believe, formulating an opinion and expressing it.

The theme of "Working Cooperatively" was another focus of parent responses. They seemed to be expressing their feeling that children working together, cooperatively, on a project was important. This aspect of making the programs looked to be a critical one for parents as those words came up in almost all of the responses.

One parent responds,

> In making these programs working together and being responsible had to have played a role.

Another writes,

> It taught them how to organize a program and work cooperatively.

And another,

> They had to work cooperatively to make the show work.

And,

> They were working together with classmates.

Also very evident among responses was the aspect of certain skills they worked on in making the programs. Many parents defined what they saw and witnessed as the programs progressed.

This parent explains,

> It teaches them how to organize a program, speak in front of a group and realize a good end product.

Another relates,

> This could be used to reinforce any educational material.

And,

> It gives them a chance to use writing skills for a finished product.

And another,

> It involves types of learning I consider invaluable, hands-on participatory, communication skills, poise.

One parent states,

> The exercise of having to plan out and review material which had then to be written up in a suitable form for broadcast was a most useful one. Also seeing each program created from start to finish gave our child a good overview of how important good organizational skills are in producing a satisfactory end result.

This parent writes,

> It is an opportunity to center the curriculum around multiple learning styles. It is practice in thinking, planning, working as a team.

And,

> They had to learn to be precise and concise in presenting their information. A good habit to get into.

And again,

> It helped develop speaking and writing skills.

In responding, parents were very thoughtful and specific in their answers. This allowed me to gain a different perspective from those directly involved, that of observer or, in this case, listener. In their answers they covered important aspects of the programs, those of educational value and also those of personal value to their children.

There was another aspect that some of the parents viewed as a valuable result of the programs: the children's awareness of "audience". In some responses there was an allusion to the awareness of someone other than family members or classmates listening. In others the word itself was used.

One parent observed,

> It involved experiential opportunity in a real working environment. Among the benefits I see that he has gained are poise...

Another states,

> (It allowed) practice in dealing with performance anxiety.

And also,

> They made something real, for a real audience.

Another parent states,

> It encouraged kids to have opinions and express them.

Yet another parent perceives,

> It teaches them how to organize a program, speak in front of a group...

This parent recognizes,

> It teaches kids how to behave when in the public eye (or ear), pride in a job well done and shared with such a large body of people.

And another,

> She enjoyed the performance aspect and the thrill of being on radio.

In all of these observations the respondents had first hand access to reactions of not only their children but of themselves as well. The number of times the words "proud" and "excited" were used when describing their children's reactions gives an overall indication that the making of the programs was successful in at least one aspect of their intent, that of eliciting enthusiasm and motivation of the participants to do well. The outcome of the programs was obviously important to the children because of their awareness that they would be listened to. This was demonstrated in the number of parents' responses that indicated their child wanted other family members to know about the programs and to listen.

A further investigation of the programs' effects on the children was looked at through an interview with the classroom teacher.

Teacher Interview

As previously discussed in Chapter I, I had been doing radio programs with children for a number of years before Jack approached me to do them with his class. I saw first hand how children had become excited about the idea of being on radio and how, even after initial hesitation, some children became enthusiastic and proud of what they had done. Parents contacted me to be sure of when the programs would be

aired, what place on the radio dial they should turn to, and what day to listen. There was no doubt to me personally as to the effects that the idea of being on radio had on children. That included children from kindergarten through sixth grade.

With this experience behind me I knew that being on radio was not only exciting to children, but I also felt that it could be educational and motivating to them.

Researchers such as Stevenson and Carr (1993), also Elliot Eisner (1991), Marna Bunce-Crim (1992), and Marsha Sprague (1993) emphasize the fact that children need to be personally recognized for their work in school, that this is an important part of the educational goal of schools. Questions of this nature were asked of the classroom teacher to determine if any educational benefits had been achieved.

During my interview with him I asked "Jack" what he felt were his intentions when he first thought of the idea of doing the programs with his class, and also what he felt the results were.

> I was just thinking about the kids and meaningful activities that they could do during the year. You know, you're always looking for very motivating activities for kids to do. I think themselves being on the radio and all the activities that went around that, the working and all the practicing would be an exciting thing.

I knew that being an experienced elementary school teacher he had to have some specific benefits in mind for his class. With that awareness I asked if he would elaborate on what he saw as the potential to his class of doing the programs.

> Basically, that there would be a lot of academic-type tasks involved in doing a radio show, from writing to planning... the main thing was it would be as a class- building activity, building a sense of community in the class, and something we would all be doing together. I think everybody participated on some level, which was a goal of mine, to have everybody on the radio.

Asked to be more specific, Jack continued,

> There are always different opportunities. Kids are on different levels of doing work, different reading levels, math levels...and this would be something we would be clearly working on together as a class.

To provide some comparison between curriculum with radio and without radio, I asked Jack an open-ended question, 'What was your curriculum for fourth graders before you did the radio shows?' Jack began with an explanation of reading, then continued with a description of his normal writing program.

> The normal language arts curriculum, reading, we do a lot of work in novels, and doing basic questioning, critical, inferential, and we usually do some projects around the novels.
>
> Writing program without thinking about the radio shows would be to establish different genres of writing for the kids to work on...what a personal narrative is...a research project...descriptive writing...They work on autobiographies at the beginning of the year...creative stories, and basically there would be a lot of individual work. They would certainly have peer conferencing and talking to each other about their writing...but in terms of collaborative writing happening, you know it really is not built into the curriculum at all...and I think that's a real key part of where the radio comes in...is that they do work in teams, they're working on a topic and there's tons of collaborative writing...which is different than my normal curriculum.

What surprised me in the course of interviews with the children was that they told me about all the collaborative work they did in preparation for the shows, during the time they were deciding what to do, and then again during their writing. It turned out to be what I called a three point checking system; children would write a piece, check it and read it to a partner, then the piece would be taken to the teacher for a final check. I asked Jack to explain what was his normal routine and how this experience in radio differed.

> It's what they do in a normal writing process, but the ownership of the piece still belongs to the individual. But this is very clear that the group takes ownership when they're writing for the radio, and, in this way it is very different. The incentive to make it come out good...I mean just having in their mind that the end product is something that they're going to be putting on the radio...the thoroughness of both the editing and the content...everything happens on a much higher level because everybody...it's just built in...everybody really wants to feel good about what they're going to be saying on the radio because a lot of people are going to be hearing it. What's different is the purpose of what they're doing, writing for an audience.

Realizing that there can never be a roomful of people who are of the same mind in all things, I asked Jack if there were some students who did not want to do the shows.

> There were some who were very reluctant to do it at first, just because they were nervous or embarrassed. There were some kids who wanted to be on it every time, and have the longest parts. Other kids, I would find something, so at a very minimal level a child could find a poem that they liked, maybe four lines, and just read it into a microphone and tape recorder. There were some kids who said 'I just don't want to be on this show.' And that was fine with me because by

> that time everyone got to hear themselves on the radio.

I asked Jack to tell me how he saw these programs as being educational in any way to his students.

> There were basically two ways. One is the topics themselves and how they fit into the curriculum. In other words the crayfish show was basically a culminating activity of a unit we did on crayfish and it summarized a lot of the unit.

Jack explained how doing the radio program about the science unit on crayfish "picked out the most exciting parts of the unit for each student who participated, and in that way", he suggests, "they would formulate and summarize stuff." In this way Jack saw how it would allow students to be "more aware of their learning."

He explains further how he thought doing the shows was beneficial for his students:

> All of a sudden, after the unit, they were thinking about how this unit affected them. They would pick out the best parts...it was really great when we built the raft (to release the crayfish into the river). That was a very meaningful activity for them...that's what they chose to do...that helped them learn about themselves as learners.

The radio shows were built around themes the children were studying in class and units of study. Jack explains more about how he organized the programs around themes.

> The thematic approach...well, in the crayfish show we were in the middle of a unit, so it was a natural suggestion that we do a show about it...and, of course, I would maybe get a little bit more enthusiastic about one topic versus another...but it was basically their idea.

Jack expands on the thematic approach by recalling other programs.

> Our play, "Freedom Days", was during African American History month and it was issues we were studying. We used that in learning about different aspects of the civil Rights Movement. From actual historical facts to vocabulary...what is a segregationist?...to why did they do this?

In reflecting on the educational aspects of their civil rights program Jack recalls how the class got into discussions about what they were doing.

> The play would be on the radio...but in practicing it...when a child would give a Martin Luther King, Jr. speech the child really wanted to know what he or she was saying, so we would go over the speech for meaning.

Jack emphasized that because the children were practicing for what they knew would be heard in public, on the radio, he wanted to be sure they knew and understood what they were saying, and also that people listening would understand what they were trying to say. He felt this was taking place and took it into consideration when planning the programs.

> One thing which I really liked about it, especially fourth graders and their writing, do not write for an audience in mind. They write for themselves and sometimes it's not very clear what they're saying. So when you're writing for radio clearly you have to have an audience in mind. I've stressed that with the kids a lot, you know, writing for a listener to listen to what you've written.

Donald Graves (1991) has said that what drives the writing process is "voice". This voice he speaks of is the person that comes through in the writing. This is the personal part that goes into creating a piece

of writing and one to which teachers should pay attention. In expressing their writing "voice" and then hearing what they have written their personal "voice" is reinforced. Graves states, "It is no accident that children enjoy reading their selections aloud, that professional writers have public readings of their work, or that writing compels us to speak to others,..." (pg. 162). Graves concluded that the human voice is an elementary part of writing, and that hearing themselves speak what they have written helps children become better writers.

Jack went into some detail about how he saw the children's writing for an audience as educationally beneficial for his class.

> Writing for an audience, which is a very painstaking skill that the kids learned, in this way...I mean...just naturally they have to hear what they're writing as if someone is listening. I always tried to tell the kids, you know, write for the reader, think about what somebody's going to hear when you write your piece...this is already built in. It's almost as if the reminders don't have to happen that much 'cause they know it's going to be on the radio.

He continued,

> Their writing tends to be more in-depth also because of what they want...I mean there's more meaning to it. It's not just for, like, a research project they're going to present orally and allowed to make mistakes in front of the class and then it's over. This is something that's going to be living out there in the world.

For example, Jack explained that a portion of one of the shows was a news segment. Some children took articles from a newspaper, rewrote them, and made their own news show. One student took an article about the 1991 presidential race which gave information about the men running for office. In the student's first draft he gave basic information

about the candidates that he had taken from the article. This information included where the candidates lived, and what offices they held before this campaign.

In his second draft, rewritten after the first check with his peers, he included much more information than the first, and also added some editorial comments. In the second draft he included answers to questions such as, 'What would you like to see a president do?', and 'How could our president do more for the people of the country?' This, Jack explained, was directly a result of the student's understanding than, 1. his report was going to be heard by an audience outside of the classroom, and 2. he needed to have a deeper understanding of what was in the article so that he could explain it to this audience.

In answer to those questions the news reporter asked, he answered editorially, "A president should improve education and add more teachers. A president should help out poor communities, lower taxes, and also stop spending so much money on the Pentagon." These statements clearly show that the student developed a deeper understanding of his report in the second draft.

As Jack explained, the children's writing seemed to be more in-depth when they were writing for the radio than it might normally be, but, I thought, what about their mechanical skills? How were they approaching these when writing for the radio? It might have been easier to forget capitals, commas, periods, and other mechanics when writing for the radio.

> One thing interesting about the mechanics is that I think they realize that putting a comma here or a period there helps them with their

> speaking, you know, which is something they don't usually make the connection with. So when they start to read their piece to me and something rambles...they find that if they put the commas there it helps them with their reading. So even if there is a little trade off in that it's not quite so thoroughly edited for mechanics, the mechanics that do creep in to their writing are important for reading.

For example, some children, after writing their scripts for a program, then reading them out loud to their partner, would rewrite them with better punctuation.

An example of a partial interview a child wrote reads,

> Q: Mr. Tattenbar may I trouble you to answer a few questions about what you think of the laws.
>
> A: Aye sure, as long as it's quick.

The same sentences after the student practiced and rewrote the script for final taping.

> Q: Mr. Tattenbar, may I trouble you to answer a few questions about what you think of the laws?
>
> A: Aye, sure, as long as it's quick.

This first example demonstrates that the student realized how the addition of a question mark and a comma helped clarify to the reader and the listener what was being said.

Here is another student-written interview which gives an example of this same realization of the importance of good punctuation in written material when reading to an audience. Before practicing out loud to a partner the script reads:

> Q: How much of the show do you write?
>
> A: Pretty much all of it except for when we have plays.

After practicing and rewriting the script an important comma has been added to separate two ideas.

> Q: How much of the show do you write?
>
> A: Pretty much all of it, except for when we have plays.

Another example demonstrates again the children's realization of the need for commas to separate ideas.

This person writes,

> Yesterday was quite a day. I got carried down to a rocky beach and I got put on a raft and a giant thing put me in the water.

After listening to them the sentences were rewritten as,

> Yesterday was quite a day. I got carried down to the rocky beach, put on a raft, and a giant thing put me in the water.

This last example demonstrates that not only did the student realize that putting commas in the right places would make the content of the sentences clearer, but that rewriting them slightly made the story more interesting.

Jack indicated that there was also a difference in the way the children approached their reading.

He explains,

> Their approach to reading, I think, is very different too. Take the report on the sun. She had to research this and she had to understand the article thoroughly. It's not just understanding the article for some comprehension questions or doing a project, it's understanding so that she can really convey the information to the listener.

To further illustrate the children's awareness of what they were saying and how it would sound to the listener he talked about the content of their work and their vocabulary.

> In terms of writing I think I saw a lot of differences in vocabulary uses. This is especially true when kids have done a number of shows and they've gotten further along into the year...a lot of kids saw that using some exciting vocabulary made it a little more interesting. In this way content takes on a major role.

To illustrate, Jack mentioned some words that this student used in describing the sun's rays and what they could do to people: then, after rewriting and reading it to her partner, she decided to change some words. She began, Jack explained, by using words such as "hot" and "burn". In her second draft she changed those to "scorch" and "damage".

As Jack had stated had been part of his original goal, another crucial part of putting the programs together was the fact that the children did so much cooperative work. Many of the programs had children working together on reports or plays or poems and stories. Here Jack recalls what that effort involved.

> Basically there were a lot of cooperative activities. The kids worked in groups constantly to figure out their segment. So they would have to make some decisions about how they were going to work together, which is obviously a very important social skill. And the other thing is writing and editing and reading...all these things took hours and hours.

Generally, for the class as a whole, the programs seemed to have educational benefits. I questioned Jack further to try and see if there were any specific instances he could tell me about where a child might have benefited in a specific way by being on radio.

Jack recalls,

> One student comes to mind who has a speech problem, he stutters. He has made a lot of progress this year and was very eager to try out some of his new found fluency doing radio programs. It was wonderful to see him participating. It was an obstacle that he really wanted to jump, this hurdle to be on a show.

I asked him to recall how much this student became involved in the programs and how he thought the student benefited.

> I don't think he had very much to do with the first few shows, but then after awhile he really got into it, and he heard himself on the radio, this person who was speaking fluently...I don't think there's a way to describe what that would mean to him after having this speech disability. I think emotionally it was very helpful.

Since I knew that not all the programs were heard by everyone each time they were on the radio, I asked Jack to tell me how they responded hearing themselves, say, for the first time if they did not hear a program on the radio, and heard it in the classroom.

> The biggest thing was that they would deny it was them. The tape recorder does different things to your voice, and you hear yourself differently on the air or a tape recorder than you think you sound. They respond a lot to their voices. But also, if people were making noise or if they were just jittery or chatting, they wanted kids to be quiet. They wanted to hear themselves.

There had been some comment in the children's journals about not sounding normal, and I understood that sometimes, because AM radio does not always have the best reception in the evening, programs were hard to hear because of the inevitable static. I asked him to comment on how the children felt about this.

> I don't know. I think that the fact that they knew it was on and other people were hearing it was just as important as hearing it themselves.

I asked Jack if there was any discussion among the children about their awareness of being heard by the public. There were, he explained, "comments about how they were trying to do a professional job or a good job." One way this was evidenced, he said, was in the care children would take in what they presented on the air.

Jack explained,

> I noticed some of them on their note cards wrote out all their sentences. There was a lot of 'I've got to write this again.'

A few of the kids also went into recording sessions with just ideas and would talk about them. This I saw as a real skill even for adults. Some children were able to do this when they were doing their movie reviews. These few, (three at the most), had ideas on how they felt about a certain film and why, and had the ability to just talk about their ideas. This was the exception, though. The majority of the children had their scripts written out in final form before taping began.

Another question I had for Jack was that of self-esteem. I asked him if he had witnessed any examples of self-esteem building during the programs. He answered,

> Yes, I did. Again I mention that poems and stories segment was a real catch-all type segment that people could basically do what they're good at, because there were no rules for that at all. I tried to have them do mostly original stuff, any original poems or stories that they wanted to do.

When asked to name a specific incident, Jack explained,

> I think one student, for instance, has a tough time with a lot of academic tasks, but he has a real command of language and vocabulary and creative ideas. He knew this opportunity would exist for him to just explore his own language or poetry. He's a kid who likes praise, so, I think, just taking that opportunity he knew he would have an outlet to do that. I think this made him feel good about himself.

I asked Jack to wrap up his response to doing the radio shows with his students and speculate on what he might change if he were to do them again. He talked about what he would change,

> I would just add a lot more structure to it. There was a tendency for some kids to always work together, so I would try to balance that out, like I would in any curriculum in terms of learning partners. I would be much more conscious about what kind of things individuals were doing.

Here Jack makes reference to the fact that some children always did a poem, or always did a story. Because of the time element some weeks, children were at times put into a niche. Jack further reflects,

> Basically I would make the curriculum more structured, but not lose any of the spontaneity. I think the kids could handle and benefit from doing more varied activities within the shows.

Jack also thought it would be important to "keep both a class journal and individual journals." That would, he felt, "bring a lot more of what they were doing to the metacognition stage."

What led the children to want to do the shows in the first place was not merely the fact they would be doing their own shows, but, as they indicated on the initial listening survey before doing any programs, that they would be on radio. This, they assumed, was an adult

medium, yet they were being given the chance to enter this adult world for a short time and to enjoy the attention that would afford. So many times in their journals the word "excited" appears to describe how they felt. This word was also used by parents to describe how their children felt.

In the children's own post-study questionnaires they expressed positive feelings about themselves as readers and writers after being on the radio. Their responses bring into evidence a level of self-confidence achieved because of their experience. The children were made to feel, and rightly so, that this was their project, that these were their shows. They were responsible for how they would sound, and in many cases, what they would say. Their writing, editing, and rewriting, they understood, would benefit the final product and themselves, so a lot of effort was put into that aspect of the programs. Their taking responsibility for the final product made them want to listen to themselves after taping and to, in many cases, tape it again until they felt it was acceptable. This shows a concern for making a good product, one that many people, they understood, would listen to.

Summary

Pre- and Post-Study Children's Questionnaires

Although there is no definitive way to tell whether or not doing the radio shows made a difference in the children's reading or writing progress, some children felt this was the case, and some of the data suggest this is true. In the pre- and post-study questionnaires the children rated themselves as readers and writers. Many of the children felt that they had improved their skills after the programs were

finished. When asked about their writing ability, their answers ranged from before the programs of "fair" to after the programs of "good". Several of the answers were even more positive ranging from "fair" to "very good". The majority of answers were positive, which indicates doing the programs may have influenced their opinions of themselves. In fact, there was a great deal of writing and reading involved in the making of the programs and indications are strong that children's positive opinions are linked to their participation. Answers to the question "How did you like being on the radio?" included ones like this one which reads, "It was hard putting together the shows, but I liked being on the radio."

Children's answers often contained conflicting emotions as the previous one. The work another student admitted was, "hard" but, "I felt like a star".

To further demonstrate how having an audience for their work affected children's efforts in school, we turn once again to the post-study questionnaires, journals, and interviews for a detailed summary.

Audience Other Than Self and Family. Thirty per cent of post-study questionnaire responses from children indicated a positive reaction to an audience, other than themselves, listening to their programs. These responses demonstrated that children were aware that people other than themselves and their families were listening to the programs, and that children liked the idea of this audience. Positive responses such as, "I liked people to hear me on the radio and I think it was a very good experience for us", shows the child to be aware of her audience and feeling good about the experience.

as an audience for their work. As children listened to the programs they also listened with their family members. This prompted journal entries which included responses about family listening and themselves listening as one response. Thirty six per cent of the overall journal entries showed a positive reaction to having their family listen along with the journal writer. The remaining journal entries did not indicate audience and were concerned with other subjects.

Negative Audience Response. A small fraction of the journal entries displayed a negative reaction to having an audience for their work. These entries were from those students who chose early on not to continue with the program. These students did not continue with their journal entries throughout the program and submitted only a few at the very beginning of the program. It is interesting to note that parents of two of these students did not respond favorably to the programs on the parent questionnaires.

No Audience Reaction Indicated. Among the journal entries for the entire period, thirty per cent submitted did not indicate any reaction to having an audience for the programs.

Student Interviews

Audience As A Motivating Factor. Fifty per cent of all of the answers to interview questions to children about audience indicated a positive response to having an audience, all types of audience, for their work on the radio programs. This audience included family, self, and the unknown audience of people who generally listen to radio. These responses were overlapping and children included references to each type of audience in their answers.

Self As Audience. Fifty per cent of the post-study questionnaire answers displayed an awareness of students listening to themselves on the radio programs. These responses included an awareness of their voice, their part in the program, and usually a self-critique as to what they felt was good or bad about what they had done individually. For the most part these were positive.

Family As Audience. Among the fifty per cent post-study questionnaire answers indicating an awareness of "self" as audience, thirty per cent of those combined an awareness of their families as an audience for their work. These were of a positive nature.

Negative Audience Response. Three responses, or fourteen of the total post-study questionnaires, indicated a negative response to having an audience listen to their work. These responses were critical of their voices on the radio, the quality of the programs and their part in the productions. These students took part in two programs at the most and ended their participation early in the year.

Journals

Audience Other Than Self and Family. Fourteen per cent of the total number of journal entries by the children indicated a positive reaction to being heard by a radio audience other than themselves or their families. Responses varied greatly in what was said about their experiences. However, in this category, children were generally upbeat in their opinions about having people they didn't know listen to their work on the radio programs.

Self and Family as Audience. In children's journal entries their responses overlapped when indicating both themselves and their families

These answers about audience also indicated that this was a motivating factor for them to do well in the programs and influenced them to put forth a greater effort than they might normally.

The other fifty per cent of the answers were not of a critical nature, but rather were not specific as to the influence of having an audience for their work.

Other questions in these interviews were unrelated to audience, and were of a more technical nature involving how the programs were put together in the classroom.

Parent Questionnaires

Audience Other Than Self. Four and one half per cent of the questionnaires returned by parents indicated that their child was aware of and reacted positively to having an audience other than themselves or their families for their work.

Audience of Self and Classmates. Fifty five per cent of the responses on parent questionnaires indicated that their child reacted positively to hearing themselves and their classmates on radio. These responses include attempts to point out specific parts in the programs which included their child and others in their class.

Remaining responses from parents did not indicate whether their child reacted to having an audience for their work, but focused on other aspects of the programs.

Teacher Interview

Thirty per cent of all the responses from the classroom teacher during an interview indicated that children were aware of their audience while preparing for the programs. This was for the most part neither a

positive nor negative awareness, but rather a knowledge that what they were doing was going to be heard by an audience.

What this indicates is that during preparation for the programs the children were made aware of the prospective audience for their work, and that the teacher indicated to the students they should try harder than they normally would to do a good job at preparing their final product.

Educational Benefits. During the teacher interview several educational benefits derived from doing the radio programs were discussed. These included an increased awareness of grammar and writing mechanics by the children. The teacher discusses how children's awareness of themselves as readers and writers was heightened by the fact that they were reading and writing for an audience.

Another area of importance to the teacher was that of a cooperative atmosphere for learning. The teacher indicated that as students in a group were assigned parts to research, memorize, or write on their own, he saw them coming together to create the final project.

Children's responses to interview questions also indicate that their heightened awareness of themselves as readers and writers through their audience influenced them to work harder toward creating a better end product.

Parents' responses to questions about the possible educational benefits of the programs were positive in eighteen out of twenty one received. They had very insightful answers such as, "expanded her awareness", "great sense of accomplishment", and "promoted enthusiastic

involvement", when talking about what they saw as the benefits of the programs.

The majority of data supports the fact that children were primarily aware of themselves and their classmates as an audience. They were listening to their own voice, their own part in the programs, and how the programs sounded overall with the whole class.

The next largest category of data supports the fact that children were aware of their families as an audience for their work. This "family" consisted of parents, siblings, and grandparents.

The last category of data looked at was that of the audience of people unknown to the students taking part. Though mention was made of this "unknown" audience, it was the least influential to the children.

Subsequent Programs

Subsequent radio programs I have done with the same teacher have revealed similar feelings in the students who participated in the shows. During informal discussions with these children I asked them how they felt about being on the radio. Some answers were, "Finally I'm going to be on the radio. Finally I'm going to be special."

These children had heard about the other radio shows done during the previous school year, and also that those programs had won an award, so when their teacher suggested that they also do some programs the children were excited about the prospect. another child said when asked how she felt about it, "It's a neat idea, a really fun experience."

Realizing from data gathered from this study that the idea of family listening was an important factor for the children involved, I asked these children who they thought would listen to the programs.

They indicated that they knew that parents, grandparents, and siblings would listen. From my observations this was an exciting idea to them.

Being curious also about their motivation to do well on the programs I asked the children how being on the radio made them feel about what they were doing. One child answered, "It makes me want to try harder. You want to impress everyone." Another child answered, "You want to do it perfect so everyone will say, 'Hey, they're pretty good.'"

In another session that same day I asked another child about what kind of job he wanted to do on the radio programs. He answered, "I just want to do the best I can."

One very interesting answer I got from this second class of fourth grade radio producers was this one. In answer to why she wanted to be on the radio this girl answered, "I wanted to do it because I wanted to let other people know my opinions." This girl was obviously aware of her audience. She knew that people would be listening to what she had to say, and this was important to her. Radio became for her a forum to air her opinions and ideas. In this case the girl wrote a news editorial about the civil war in Bosnia and the United States arms embargo imposed on that country. A subject perhaps not many fourth grade children would write about let alone understand, but educators must be willing to allow children who do understand complex situations to explore them further. This, I believe, is a large part of the education process.

Other children in this group expressed how they felt about people listening to what they said and wrote. This child said, "It made me

change my story in the beginning because it's not just one person who is listening to you, it's a lot of people." And another said, "I want to do a good job."

These instances serve to reinforce my belief that the programs were not merely important for one class during one school year, but other classes as well.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This is a qualitative study of one fourth grade class of twenty-one pupils to determine how the use of "audience" affected students' group and individual school work. Through the use of whole class brainstorming, group, and individual work, a series of six radio programs called "Kid's Talk" was put together by the students and broadcast on a local AM radio station.

Data sources included journals, pre- and post-study questionnaires, parent questionnaires, interviews with students involved, and interviews with the classroom teacher. These were analyzed to determine how students responded to putting together these radio programs, and to the knowledge that they would be heard in a public forum.

Conclusions

The questions examined in this research are 1) how does having an audience for individual and group school work affect these elementary school students, 2) what are students' and families' personal reactions to the audiotaping and public airing of their class work, 3) do students' opinions of themselves as readers and writers change at all after they have read to and written for an audience, 4) what are the possible educational benefits to students of having an audience for their individual and group school work, and 5) what are students' interest in and knowledge of radio?

The First Question

Anonymous Audience. Central among the findings demonstrated in this research is the fact that most of the children taking part in the study responded positively to having an audience for their work, as evidenced by their responses to questions in the post-study questionnaires. Children were aware of their audience and indicated that because of this they did their best. Their motivation lay in the knowledge that they were being listened to, not only by students in their class, but by their family and others they did not know. Much of what made up the children's audience was, they knew, an anonymous audience.

Children were found to be most conscious of the audience that consisted of their parents and other family members. Children wrote about listening to themselves and their peers, however, there was not a lot written by students about listening to other class members on the programs. The knowledge that an audience of unknown people listened to their programs was the least important to the children, as evidenced in their journals and student interviews.

Many journal entries alluded to the fact that children knew they were being listened to, and this determined in large part what they decided to include in their programs and how they would proceed.

For example, several times when I was at the school taping segments, students told me of how they decided to add a musical, or perhaps a spoken introduction to a part of the program because they wanted it to sound better. They also indicated that they rearranged portions of the program for this same reason. The many times that

students asked if they could listen to what they had just recorded, and then decided to do it over, suggests that they were very much aware of the fact that people would be listening to their programs. The unseen audience was always part of their awareness in planning.

In discussions I had with them before the programs began, the children told me that they considered AM radio to be a medium for adults, not for them. This fact brings to the forefront an idea that children (and adults) have that what is for adults is not for children. In many cases, of course, this is true. However, this small step into the world of adults made by these children allowed them to, for a short time, step into this adult world. Some students indicated that this was enjoyable for them.

Parents and Peers. In addition to the unseen and unknown audience was that of parents and peers. Children's awareness of the fact that parents would be listening was quite evident in their preparation and planning of programs, and strongly influenced how they approached them. Many times students came to the tapings and admitted that their parents had helped them or encouraged them in some way. One girl, after writing two poems, said that her mother had suggested she read one rather than the other. Another student said that her parent helped her choose a current event topic from the newspaper to write about. With this evidence of parental involvement children were led to believe that their parents would be listening to the final product.

Since the whole school knew about the radio show project and the children were aware that they knew about it, the participants knew that students from school would also be listening to the programs. It is

easy to understand why, with all this attention, some students said in their journals that they felt like a "star". It is also clear that the children understood that their audience included peers, parents, and that the children were motivated to bring care and attention to their programs because of this knowledge. Children did not respond to listening to others in class.

The Second Question

Reactions from Children. Children's responses in their journals and on questionnaires suggest that not all students taking part in the programs were as eager or enthusiastic as some others about being on radio. Data indicates that for two students who did not take part in more than three programs, and who were critical of themselves in the student journals they kept, the parents of those students did not give positive responses to the programs on the parent questionnaires.

Although the whole class took part in at least one program, there were several students who were eager to participate and who wanted to be in every one of them. For those children who were shy, being on radio was probably one of the easier ways to express themselves without having to actually stand in front of an audience. The fact that the microphone is an inanimate object made it easier for children to speak to it. Yet, the same objective was achieved: they were heard in public and received recognition.

Beginning with their anticipation and excitement about being on the radio and continuing to their responses on the post-study questionnaires, most of the children demonstrated a very positive reaction to what they were doing.

An indication of their willingness and desire to be heard by the public was found in their journal entries. Although children were almost to a person demonstrably embarrassed to hear themselves on radio, they wrote about wanting to do more, and of being proud and excited about being on radio.

The bulk of the children's journal entries were very short and indicated a brief summary of an emotional response to their radio experiences. Were I to use the writing of journals by children in future research I would plan to exercise more control over how and when they were written. In this case, many children did not address their deeper feelings about what was happening; instead, they wrote two or three sentences which described surface reactions and did not delve into how they really felt about this new experience. The writing of journals by the children would have been better served, I feel, if I had given them specific areas of concern to address. Those would include questions such as "What did you expect your experience to be like when you were taping the programs?", or "Were you disappointed by anything that you or others did in the programs?", or perhaps, "If this was a good (or not so good) experience for you, explain why you feel this way in as much detail as possible." Having children address specific questions such as these as well as having them write their journals immediately after recording a program, would, I believe, have resulted in more thoughtful entries.

The predominant reaction of the children after doing these radio programs was the pride and excitement they expressed knowing that their parents had listened to what they had done. The majority of post-study

questionnaires indicated this. It was clear from what the children said about their parents listening to them that parents played a significant role in motivating their children to do well on the programs and in school. Much of the literature examined in this dissertation supports the finding that the parent/school connection is certainly of major influence to student success.

Reactions from Parents. Findings concerning the second question of the study indicate an enthusiastic reaction of the parents to hearing their children on radio. Parents seemed to be equally as excited about hearing their children on the radio as the children were to be heard. Parental responses ranged from excitement and pride about hearing their child, to a realization of the amount of work done to produce the programs, and an appreciation of the educational benefit derived from the making of the programs.

The Third Question

Self-Analysis. Students' answers on the pre- and post-study questionnaires as to whether or not they felt their abilities as readers and writers had changed, for the most part, reflected a positive attitude. Most of the children either saw no change in their abilities, or changed their responses to reflect an attitude of increased ability after the study.

The Fourth Question

Areas of Learning. This study has identified several curricular areas of learning taking place in the classroom as a result of the children writing and producing their own radio programs.

Speaking and Listening. Being able to speak and listen well were a major part of the work entailed in putting together the programs. In order to produce an acceptable final product, and to be understood by listeners, children had to be able to speak clearly. They also needed to listen well, give weight to the opinions of others in their group, listen to themselves to determine whether or not they had conveyed their intended message, and also to determine if what they heard was of acceptable quality. Children learned how to present material in a clear, structured manner for their news and current events segment.

Speaking and listening well were of great importance to the success of the programs because of the auditory nature of radio itself. People do not see expressions or gestures on radio, they can only listen to whomever is speaking. If this is not done well, the whole focus of the programs is lost. Children demonstrated their understanding of this by requesting to hear themselves after they had finished taping their segments, and by retaping any part they felt was not clear the first time. Children retaped, at the most, twice before feeling what they had done was acceptable.

Reading. Children learned how to read their written material to an audience so as to be understood. They not only read material written by themselves, but by others as well. Some of the material they read, such as newspaper accounts, was not specifically written for children. By reading material that was targeted to adults, then re-writing it, as they did when, for instance, rewriting newspaper accounts of the presidential election, students were reinforcing their own knowledge by writing so others could learn. This served to broaden their range of

reading materials and levels of understanding. This also served to allow the children to focus on their abilities as readers. Because they had to listen to the programs, they became more aware of themselves as readers. As the post-study questionnaires point out, many students saw themselves as improved readers at the end of the programs.

Writing. Much writing was necessary to prepare the final programs. Even if the material the students were bringing to a program was not their own, they were re-writing, shortening, and rearranging written material on a regular basis. Rewriting was done on a major scale for their program on Colonial America, where they rewrote a play and edited conversations between fictional characters, as well as for their program about Martin Luther King, Jr. Editing played a major role in the radio productions, and by the final program children were used to editing and re-writing their work with an audience in mind.

During the taping of group segments, which were written together, children each had a copy of the script. They had to coordinate their scripts, be certain everyone had the same corrections and additions, and that it was written so it could easily be read.

Writing for radio exposed the children to critical issues in composition, such as knowing their audience, understanding the relationship between writing and its function in society of transmitting ideas and opinions, and appreciation for the power of words.

Cooperative Aspects. Another aspect of this research touches on the class working together and becoming a cooperative group. As discussed in chapter IV, much of the work that went into the making of the programs was done in a cooperative setting, with children building

consensus, planning, writing, reading, and singing together. This was the initial goal of the classroom teacher, to bring the class together as a group and a community of learners (Slavin 1983, 1986, Sharan 1984). We saw children respecting the work and opinions of others in the class, especially when they were recording their personal movie reviews. In their discussions, they argued their points, but left room for other ideas.

Forming and working in teams became an important part of creating successful programs, and the children recognized the necessity of working together cooperatively. They became interdependent with their goal of creating successful programs. I personally witnessed students stopping and waiting for another child to catch up or do a part over. I witnessed children rewriting parts and also discussing changes with one another before taping.

There were many segments in which each student in a group was assigned a part to either research, memorize, or write on their own. I didn't observe any times where a child had not done his or her part in a group assignment. This may be due in large part to the teacher who seemed to always be on top of what was going on in the class.

Individual Efforts. These programs not only highlighted the group, but they also highlighted the individual. The segment titled "Poems and Stories" was wide open for students to showcase their individuality by giving them the opportunity to write a poem or story, to put their name on it, and to be acknowledged by their community for their work.

The principal of the school, who received a copy of each program, commented on the process that the children went through, in groups and

as individuals, to create a final product. He indicated to me that the process of writing, editing, and re-writing to produce their programs, knowing that they knew would be heard in public, was perhaps one of the most valuable exercises the children could do during the year.

The Fifth Question

Children's Listening Habits. Children answered questions about their knowledge and interest in radio at the beginning of the study. Their answers reflected a limited knowledge of or interest in AM radio and a feeling that this was a medium for adults, not children. This was expressed because of the amount of news and adult "talk" on AM radio. They found nothing of interest to them there. They were familiar with FM radio music formats, however, and listened to favorite stations which was, at the most, once a day in their rooms before going to bed. Their parents listened to public radio and news.

Technology and The Radio Station. Although this was not a focus of the programs, children did learn something about radio technology. They learned about microphones and how close they should be to one before speaking. They visited the radio station and learned about some of the equipment used by broadcasters. They also saw a demonstration by me of how the tapes were edited before the final product was aired.

The children were fascinated by the prospect of being on the radio, yet they did not have to confront their audience. When they heard the programs on the air, they knew they were being listened to, and also how easy it was for them to just talk into a microphone and not have to deal with stage fright.

Having school children produce programs was also important to the radio station. Being an important part of a community, it is imperative that businesses, such as radio stations, keep strong ties with the people of that community, which involves the schools.

As discussed in the literature review in Chapter II, research has shown that it is important to a child's success in school to combine the resources of the school, the home, and the community. Children in this study were introduced to a part of their community, to the people who broadcast for a living. The field trip to the radio station brought the children closer to a part of the community and their every day life. Seeing how the business of radio is run was informative for them, and also gave them a keener sense of how radio comes into their homes.

In this way a connection among school, home, and community became a reality. The students saw what needed to be done by themselves in school, with help from parents giving ideas and support, and cooperation from the community radio station in order to actually air their programs.

Implications

Students' Needs. This study recognizes a need often identified in students to be appreciated for what they have accomplished, and has established that a public forum, such as radio, is a good way to do this. There are different types of public forums for children through which this need may be fulfilled. Putting children's work on a classroom or hallway bulletin board, having school plays or classroom projects in front of the class, writing to a newspaper and having letters published are other ways to go public with students' work. But,

as students clearly underlined in their journals and emphasized in their interviews, hearing themselves speaking in a public forum, having their parents, siblings, relatives, and even people they didn't know hear their voices was an important and exciting aspect of being on radio.

Being an effective communicator is an integral part of being a successful person in the world, whether in the classroom or outside of it. The abilities that these children have seen in themselves, and that have been acknowledged by others, will allow them to further their communication skills in other situations. It is my opinion that this small amount of success, reinforced by family and community, will stay with these children for a long time.

This study suggests that public recognition of children's learning experiences is important to that learning and needs further investigation. For children to be publicly credited for their work is motivational for them. Children routinely do large amounts of work each day in the classroom. Many times this work is completely new to them as they explore ideas and concepts unknown to them before. As seen in answers given in the student interviews, knowing that there was an audience for their work encouraged these students to do more and increasingly better work.

As an example, consider the case of the child in this class who stuttered. The classroom teacher spoke of how he was encouraged to do more writing and reading because of the success he felt he was achieving through his work on the radio programs.

Findings of this study indicate that the process of creating the radio programs benefited the class as a whole through their cooperative

work and academic efforts to do well in order to create the programs they did. Students wrote, edited, tape recorded, and thought about the process of creating work for a community larger than that of their classroom. They expanded the boundaries of their class to include not only their parents, but the parents and relatives of the other students. Even beyond this audience was the community of listeners who turned on their radios on Wednesday evenings and heard the product of their hard work.

What these children have learned is that they are capable of successfully producing radio programs for an audience. As one child stated during his interview, "I learned that I can do things and they can come out really good and people will like them." They have taken on the task of presenting their work to the adult world and have been successful in their attempt. This is a very powerful realization for these students.

Parental Support. This study adds to a body of research reinforcing the importance of parental support to a child's motivation in school. Researchers Wlodkowski and Jaynes (1991), Bloom (1985), Covington (1992), and Graves (1991), among others, attest to the evidence that parents have a lasting effect on their children's motivation to learn and an impact at every stage of development, lasting through the high school years and beyond.

Parental involvement in a child's education is one element that can counteract many possible deterrents to that child's success. Enthusiastic, caring parents can help overcome low school budgets, socioeconomic status, and other elements that may interfere with student

success. In this study some parents contributed ideas to their children about what to include in programs, as well as many of them listening together with their children to the radio shows. Many of the parents also came to a small ceremony held for the children upon learning of their award from the Massachusetts Broadcasters Association.

This study has also shown the importance of not only parental support of their child in school, but also of parental communication with the classroom teacher. What many of these parents saw, and which they wrote about in their post-study questionnaires, was an enthusiastic, imaginative teacher who allowed children to express themselves in many exciting ways, and that their involvement mattered to not only their child's but also the teacher's success.

Public Recognition

The MBA Award

Before 1990 I was not aware that the Massachusetts Broadcasters Association gave awards for children's radio programs. My program director at the radio station suggested to me that I enter one of the earlier entertainment programs I had produced called "Just For Kids" for an award, and at first I was skeptical. Our station was in a small market and I had produced the programs alone with no special effects or unusual efforts aimed at awards. I had only wanted to provide a program especially for children on a largely adult forum, AM radio.

The nomination came as a surprise to me. But the fact that the program won a second place award from among all the children's radio programs submitted in the state, reinforced my initial conviction that radio for children was valid and that I should do more.

In the Fall of 1992 I again submitted programs, three "Kid's Talk" episodes, to the MBA for consideration. I was pleased and surprised to find that "Kid's Talk" had won first place for children's radio programming in Massachusetts. Because of an unknown and unexplained mixup I had not received notification of the program's nomination for the award, so I was not at the awards banquet to receive the award personally. This was unfortunate because Jack had said that it would be wonderful to be able to go to the banquet and see the ceremony, whether we had won or not. The news was quite a surprise to both Jack and myself.

Jack and I both felt that the children should get some sort of personal, public recognition for the fact that work they had contributed to the shows had won them an award; and also that their parents should be brought in to share in that recognition. Many of the parents had been openly supportive of the programs and had given lots of encouragement, especially when children had brought in recipes and holiday stories from home. In this respect the programs were really a cooperative effort between school, parents, and the community. To celebrate Jack and I held a small awards ceremony at the school for the children and their parents. Each child received a small trophy with their name and the title, "Kid's Talk", engraved on them. It recognized the efforts that both the children and their teacher had put into making the shows possible. We also had a plaque made for the school for the award. In this way, we agreed, the school would be reminded of both the efforts of the children and of their achievement.

Recommendations

Public recognition and acknowledgement of what children have accomplished also means acceptance and gives legitimacy to their work. Children must grow to become part of their community, and this concept of public recognition is a step toward that goal. Morrow and Suid (1977) explore the possibility of making an important connection for school children with their work, through mass media, to the "real world" outside of the school.

Most schools are prepared to deal with the day-to-day cognitive and physical needs of children. Consideration must also be given to what motivates children to work for success. Wlodkowski and Jaynes (1992) speak of the self-fulfilling prophecy and the importance of bolstering students' self-image, as anyone who believes they can succeed usually will.

Since children are sometimes easily affected by the opinions others have of them, positive public recognition could play an effective role in any curriculum designed to motivate children to do their best. Covington (1992) suggests that students do have a need for recognition and that this recognition, or lack of same, can influence how and if they learn.

While it may not be possible for every teacher to have their class on the radio, the possibility still exists of tape recording programs in the classroom put together by students with as much care and responsibility attached to the successful outcome, and having those programs heard school wide.

The concept of public recognition might be especially effective for foreign language classes. Many communities today have segments of their population that speak a language other than English as a primary language. Students learning English as a second language, or those learning Spanish, (as well as other languages) could write poems, news stories, and even short plays in a language they were studying. Writing, reading, and then listening to a taped program would be learning the language on multiple levels. Not only would they be thinking and writing in another language, but they would also be speaking in that language so others could understand what was being said. Learning a new or second language requires attention to details on the part of the student as well as the teacher.

Graves (1992) proposes that a result of publishing can be teachers working with more of students' skills. He affirms that specific skills such as spelling and grammar receive "greater attention when they go to broader audiences..." (pg. 55).

Radio stations in my experience are usually very willing to talk to people who have ideas for public service programming. This programming does not have to be on a regular basis, but could be done a couple of times during a school year.

This is especially true of AM radio stations. Federal Communications Commission regulations dealing with relicensing of radio stations require that an amount of programming time must be set aside for "public service". Simply stated, radio stations must air programs that cover issues of concern to the local listening population.

FM stations must also serve the public; however, AM stations are by nature more local since the AM signal does not usually reach long distances. There are the 50,000 watt exceptions that will, on a clear night, reach many miles. But as a rule, AM stations are not that powerful, reach smaller audiences, and as a result, are more conducive to covering issues of local importance.

The concept of public recognition for work that students do in school does not have to be one that is complex. Another way to publicly recognize children's work is a local newspaper. Several newspapers have taken the initiative to work with teachers and students to create their own weekly section of a newspaper. While this may seem to be something more appropriate for junior or senior high school students, the elementary school level is an excellent place for children to start. As discussed in Chapter II (Graves, 1992, Bunce-Crim 1993), besides hearing their voice on radio there is also a great thrill for children seeing their name in print.

We may hear adults say at times that they still, in some situations, feel like a child, uncertain, nervous, or insecure about themselves in an ever increasingly competitive world. We must recognize these feelings in children and give them opportunities to build a foundation of self-confidence in the face of the competition they will inevitably face.

It is important that schools connect more of their curriculum to the world outside of the classroom and beyond the school. As this study indicates, children are quick to make associations with community issues and interests. It was fascinating for these students to connect the old

world of Plimoth Plantation to their world today. Issues ranging from what school was like in the 1600's, to how children lived in the community, what laws and customs were, came to life for them when they wrote plays about these things and then presented them for a radio audience. The learning was two- or three-fold; the children experienced the field trip to Plymouth, read about the time period, wrote their own plays, then listened to them on the radio.

The same multilevel experience was gained from their science unit on crayfish. Children raised the crayfish, fed them, weighed them, named them, wrote about them, released them back into their natural environment, wrote a song about them, then related all this to a radio audience. As their teacher said about this type of experience, "They learned about themselves as learners."

Educational Techniques

A Question of Control. There may be some in this country today suggesting that we go back to the basics of education, meaning strict control of the classroom with children quietly sitting at their desks, concentrating on the rules of math, English grammar, science, geography, and listening to the teacher.

Researchers explored in Chapter II of this dissertation recognize that children can learn basic school curricular without making them feel that going to school is some kind of punishment. Our children are all individual with different needs and different talents, and these talents must be discovered and nurtured if children are to succeed and contribute fully to society.

A way of addressing children's differing needs and talents is to allow them to be creative in the classroom. The radio programs created and produced by the children in this study permitted them to explore their talents of reading, writing, and oral expression.

Recent researchers of education (Ames 1992, 1989, Anderman 1994, Anderson 1990, Brophy 1992, Covington 1992, Elbow 1981, Flanagan 1993) acknowledge that the world is constantly changing, and that new technologies demand more creativity, independent thought, and cooperative skills from graduates of our educational system (see also Slavin, 1983, Sharan, et al. 1984, and Johnson and Johnson 1986). Those who grew up in a less technologically demanding society did not have to master the skills or think as creatively and work as cooperatively as our children must today. Schools need to challenge students, and they must also nurture the innate curiosity that all young children have about new things.

There are many different ways of learning new things. The old school of thought saw only one way: sit in your seat, be quiet, and do your lessons. Don't speak out, don't ask questions, don't be different in any way. I was a part of that dogmatic system as were many of us.

Seeking out that curiosity in our children and sparking it to life may be possible by letting students know how important their ideas are, not only in school, but outside in the community as well. Research explored in this dissertation suggests that encouraging children to explore their own limits can inspire them to go beyond what is expected of them and to create their own learning. Letting children know that what they have done, what they have learned is valuable, can instill in

them the value of learning, which in turn can become its own motivation (Wlodkowski, Jaynes 1991, Graves (1992), Bunce-Crim (1993).

While those students most conscious of their own needs and talents will perhaps give greater value to learning, those who have not yet discovered their talents will need help and encouragement to find them and bring them to light.

Schools as a whole can influence how students view education and its relevance and importance in their lives. Anderman and Maehr (1994) suggest that the goals a school emphasizes can influence individual students' goals, and this influence increases with grade level.

Future Programs

One thing that both the classroom teacher and I decided on at the end of the school year was that, if we were going to do more, there would be some changes made in the planning of the programs. Because neither of us had done such an extensive project with children and radio as this had turned out to be, we were both novices going in. We were unaware of just what would be needed in terms of planning and execution to air a final product. Jack felt that we had tried to do too many shows and that it might be more logical to do fewer programs, and, as Jack had witnessed with a few students in this class, lessening the possibility of children becoming bored. Fewer programs would also assure that time to cover his other curriculum subjects, such as math and social studies, would not be jeopardized. Jack realized that although much reading, writing, and research was accomplished while preparing the shows, not every curriculum subject could be covered in the radio programs.

There were days when Jack called me to say that he would not be able to let me do any taping in school with the children because it was necessary to catch up on a few things in the curriculum that were running behind schedule. I don't feel that the quality of the programs suffered because of these interruptions in taping, but I do feel that sometimes the children were, in some situations, rushed into making certain decisions about what they were going to do. This also may have cut down on the opportunities for children to repeat something that they thought might have been done better if they had taped it a second time.

Recommendations For Further Study

In the classroom today teachers are faced with many problems that students bring with them to school. Teachers are not always capable of handling these problems, nor should they be expected to. It is unfortunate that today's teacher must prepare each day not only to teach, but to counsel children, deal with those who are abused and neglected, and generally face many children who do not come to school prepared to learn.

Recommendations for further study might include one that would research classroom projects designed to help children overcome many doubts they have about their own abilities as learners. Doing the radio programs allowed children to put their name on individual projects, such as stories and poems, as well as to be part of a whole project, "Kid's Talk". This afforded children individual as well as group success. In the case of this research the classroom teacher expressed his belief that the students taking part in these radio programs were learning about themselves as learners as they presented their work to others

through radio. Students themselves while being interviewed admitted that they had more confidence in their abilities as readers or writers because of their participation in the radio programs.

Improving The Process

The process of data collection that included the children keeping journals could have yielded more data, I feel, if I had taken more control over how this was done. Asking specific questions for the children to respond to in each journal entry would have allowed them to focus more closely on their thoughts and feelings. Setting aside a specific time for journal writing, perhaps immediately after listening to a program in class or after a taping segment, would allow an immediate reaction instead of letting time pass between taping, listening, and writing about these.

Learning The Skills of Radio Broadcasting

Future studies could focus on allowing children to learn the skills involved in editing and broadcast studio techniques. This would entail a much greater curricular commitment and more time spent on communications skills for students. Here teachers could combine the processes of writing skills and editing for broadcast. A question teachers could focus on might include, how does writing for broadcast differ from normal letter writing, or report writing?

Other Populations

Rural Areas. Conducting a study such as this in rural areas would allow students, who may not have such opportunities, to present their work to an audience outside of their school.

At Risk Students. This study could be expanded to involve a population of at risk children determine if those with low self-esteem could be encouraged to see themselves as effective learners. I am reminded of the student with autism, who, even though he could not speak, found his work being read to a large audience of listeners. The fact that his work was included with the rest of the class, and that he personally said his name at the end of his poem that was read by another student, made him smile and clap his hands after the segment was taped.

Language Differences. Replicating this study to help students whose primary language is not English would allow them to focus on listening to themselves while learning a new language, and to create a product for an audience.

Gender Differences. Another study could look at how audience affected girls or boys differently or how this influenced reading, writing, and speaking in each group. In some areas I observed gender differences in how students presented their work to the public, as well as the subjects they chose to include. Boys in this study often chose to include work about sports, both their personal experiences with sports they were involved in and their observations of professional sports. Girls in this study were very often the only participants in the poems and stories segment.

Another gender difference I discovered was during the interviews I conducted with students. All of the girls that I questioned about their experiences of being on radio were very willing and eager to discuss details about making the programs and being heard on radio. The girls

were more than willing to talk in detail about specific instances that they remembered.

The boys, on the other hand, were not as vocal about how they felt, and many times I needed to ask more questions, or even change the wording of some questions to get them to describe their feelings about this experience.

Discovering gender differences regarding student's reactions to being heard by an audience would, I feel, be an interesting topic for further research.

Different Age Groups. The population of this study was between nine and ten years old. Another study could focus on younger or older populations of students. Kindergarten, where children are learning to socialize with their peers, can be a difficult time to attempt cooperative projects. Yet this may also be an ideal time to begin teaching children strategies for cooperating on a project which resulted in public recognition of their efforts.

Junior or high school populations would be an interesting age level for a study such as this. At this age level students are getting ready to emerge into the society around them. Junior high students are normally awkward and unsure of themselves, dealing with the onset of emotions that come with their age and the changes their bodies are going through. They also have incredible energy which could be directed toward projects they could present to the public. It seems to me that students at this age level have a definite need to be self-confident and accepted not only by peers, but adults as well. A study of how having

an audience for their school work affected students at the junior high level would prove extremely interesting.

Much research has been done on what motivates students at the middle to junior high school level. Findings of this research by Maehr (1989, 1991, 1992, 1993), Anderman (1993) and others in relation to a goal theory analysis hinges on students having a "perceived purpose of doing something-a course of action" (Maehr, Anderman 1994, pg. 294) as a primary factor in determining a student's level and quality of involvement. Other researchers cited in this work such as Carole Ames (1990, 1992) and Jere Brophy (1976) have also researched this age level for motivational aspects of middle school and junior high level learning.

It stands to reason that if the effects of having an audience for students' school work researched in this study were found to be positive at the elementary school level that this same process could be adapted for higher levels of learning.

High school students are not only continuing their secondary education but are also preparing for college. How high school students react to presenting their work to an audience would be an interesting and informative investigation for not only a researcher, but the students as well. At this age level it is also important for students to have experience listening to themselves, and being listened to by the community, which they will soon enter as contributing members.

Reflections

I have witnessed many times during my career as a student and a professional broadcaster the excitement of both children and adults at

the prospect of being heard by an audience on the radio. It is somewhat the same as speaking in public or being on stage in a play; however, the radio audience is unseen and, for the most part, unknown. This is probably one of the reasons it is easier to speak into a radio microphone than it is to be on stage. You know the audience is out there, but you don't have to look it in the eye, and they can't see you.

Children involved in this study who admitted that they were motivated to work and to learn by reflecting, "you wanted to sound the best you could." and, "You gotta do a little better than you usually do, you try your best.", also motivated the teacher to do more programs with subsequent classes. He was greatly encouraged by the reactions of the children and, even though it seemed hectic at times, the students spoke of their "satisfaction of being on the radio and people were listening to us...", and how "It made me feel like I was doing something that people liked and it made me feel good."

This same rewarding outcome has also been my experience. I have been exposed to an energy to learn and to promote learning from both teacher and students. This has continued through two more years of doing radio shows with this teacher.

By inviting me into his classroom, and with many students bringing ideas for program content from their parents with them to school, this teacher has created in his classes, as Martin Covington (1992) has described it, a sense of academic community which involves a cooperating effort among the parents, the community, the school, and the children. From many statements made by the students this research has shown that the participants reacted favorably to the attention of their parents and

recognition from the community. The effects are cyclical in nature, and self-perpetuating. As the children received more attention and encouragement from their parents and the teacher, and myself, they in turn wanted to "do a little better" than they usually did. This in turn resulted in positive feedback reinforcement from parents as was witnessed by their encouraging statements in some journal entries such as, "my mom said it was great...that made me feel proud of myself", and "my grandma enjoyed it."

The children found, not only by the fact that they won an award, but also from the positive reactions from their parents, that they had the ability to produce quality radio programs. If there was a perceived capacity of ability before the programs were aired on radio, their involvement, as witnessed in the children's post-study interviews with statements such as, "I felt better about my writing 'cause I knew people liked the shows", encouraged a greater perceived capacity. Covington (1992) suggests that schools should encourage this perception in children.

Evident in this study was the positive relationship between the students and their teacher. They worked together and faced the same obstacles, such as the question of topics for programs and who would take which parts. This resulted in a learning situation for both parties as witnessed when mistakes were made and sometimes students decided to retape individual portions of programs. The teacher discovered problems when at times he would call me to say he needed to postpone a scheduled taping because of an unexpected situation that had come up at school. We found solutions by reworking schedules, however,

and both teacher and students heard the final product together, if not by listening to the programs on radio, by listening to the programs on cassette tape in the classroom. I am sure that the success these children experienced was due in no small part to the involvement of their teacher. He had a clear, concise vision of what he wanted the children to experience, and he felt that this was accomplished. I do not feel these programs would have been so successful had the teacher not been so involved.

Initial steps taken to encourage students to develop their uniqueness can be accomplished through small group projects. Students given the chance to brainstorm in small groups will be able to feed on each other's ideas in a cooperative, goal-setting atmosphere, and can explore their own creative energies. Later, as children develop a sense of self-confidence in their own ideas, larger projects can be undertaken.

It was a privilege for me to work with the children and their teacher. By working with those who were shy or reluctant to speak into a microphone, I learned how important it is to be sensitive to the emotional needs of students as well as recognizing their educational needs by appreciating their multiple efforts and accomplishments in the classroom. How can we separate the two? I found that the children's trust in me, my confidence in Jack as a teacher, along with my growing confidence in the children and their enthusiasm, led to a recipe for cooperation. The result was a common effort with a common goal, that goal being a successful radio program giving children a forum from which to be heard; an audience for their work in the classroom.

I was reminded of how intelligent young people are and how we must not fail to listen to them and help them listen to each other and each other's ideas, for they are valid ones. Through the positive descriptions the children gave of listening to programs together with their parents and other family members, I was also reminded of how important parents especially, and adults in general, are to the shaping and forming of young people's ideas about themselves.

The ties that schools make with parents and the community at large, although sometimes tenuous and difficult to maintain, are extremely important to the success of children in school. Children who are accepted and encouraged by the world around them when they are in school will hopefully find it easier to enter and find their place in the larger world as they grow.

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF PERMISSION

Dear Parent/Guardian

My name is Kathleen Nowicki and I am a doctoral student in the Integrated Day Program, School of Education, at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The focus of my education program is children's literature combined with the broadcast media.

I am presently tape recording, editing, and broadcasting on radio station WHMP in Northampton, a series of radio magazine programs with your child's class at Fort River school. I have been extremely pleased at the positive response from both students and parents toward these programs and hope to continue to work with the class as the year progresses.

The reason for this letter is to ask your permission to use the data I am collecting, which consists of the children's and the teacher's responses to using radio in the classroom, along with their original stories and poems, as well as the programs themselves, for dissertation research. The purpose of my research is to discover the possible educational benefits of using the radio broadcast medium in the classroom. Results from this study should increase our knowledge of the use of the broadcast media to enhance current classroom curriculum and also how the community and business words can contribute to education.

The format of what the children have been doing will not change. They will be talking about classroom activities, writing original poems, talking about books they have read, (all in their own words) to be taped and aired on WHMP Radio, 1400 AM, in Northampton.

The findings of this study will be used in writing my dissertation, the subject of which is "Radio as an Educational Tool", for presentations made at professional conferences, and in published articles in education journals and books. Audio tapes of each program will be supplied to the school. The names of all participants in the study will be changed in any written reports or articles to protect their identity and insure their privacy. Any participant is free to withdraw from the study at any time.

At any time you are welcome to call me and ask questions about the study, (549-0044).

Sincerely,

Kathleen E. Nowicki, M.Ed.

PERMISSION FORM

CLASSROOM RADIO PROJECT

Date:_____

Student's Name:_____

Parent's/Guardian's Name:_____

Please Check:

_____I give my permission for my child to participate in the study on using radio in the classroom.

_____I do NOT give permision for my child to participate in the study on using radio in the classroom.

_____I would like more information about this study.

Please call me at_____.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature_____

Please have your child return this form to his/her teacher.

APPENDIX B

PRE-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

May, 1992

#2 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR "KID TALK"

1. Do you listen to radio?

2. What do you listen to on the radio?

3. At what times of the day do you listen to radio?

morning____ afternoon____ evening____

4. How would you rate yourself as a writer?

very good_____ good____ fair____

5. How would you rate yourself as a reader?

very good____ good____ fair____

6. If you could design your own radio program describe what it would be like? What would be on your radio program?

APPENDIX C

POST-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

May, 1992

#2 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR "KID TALK"

1. Do you listen to radio?

2. What do you listen to on the radio?

3. At what times of the day do you listen to radio?

morning____ afternoon____ evening____

4. How would you rate yourself as a writer?

very good_____ good____ fair____

5. How would you rate yourself as a reader?

very good____ good____ fair____

6. If you could design your own radio program describe what it would be like? What would be on your radio program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. After experiencing being a part of your own radio program, KID'S TALK, can you please explain here how you felt about being on radio, having other people hear you on radio, and how that may have been a good or not so good experience for you. (Use the back of this sheet if you need to.)

APPENDIX D

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS TO RESPOND TO THEIR CHILD'S PARTICIPATION ON THE RADIO PROGRAM KID'S TALK.

1. Did you (parent or guardian) have an opportunity to listen to any of the radio programs, "Kid's Talk" on WHMP radio that your child was invoved with?

Yes ____ No ____

2. If yes, can you give an approximate number of programs you listened to?

1 or 2 ____ 3 to 4 _____ 5 to 6 ____

3. Did you and your child listen together?

Yes ____ No ____

4. If you and your child listened to "Kid's Talk" together, would you describe your child's reactions to hearing the programs?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Did your child listen to the program with any other adults?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, was this adult

Another Parent ____ A Grandparent _____ A relative _____

A friend ____

6. In your opinion, what type of experience for the Fourth Graders at Fort River School was the taping and airing of these programs on WHMP radio?

Positive experience _____ Negative experience _____ Neither

positive or negative _____

7. What, if any, educational benefits did you see these programs contributing to your child's learning development?

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Please list a few of the stronger points of the program.

_____

_____

_____

9. Please list weak points of the program, if any.

_____

_____

_____

10. Please add any other suggestions/comments that you wish to share regarding the "Kid's Talk" program.

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX E

RADIO PROGRAMS

"Kid's Talk" program content for programs two through six.

Program One: outlined in Chapter III.

Program Two: Theme: Holidays in different cultures

Length: 10 minutes 30 seconds

Date Aired: December 6, 1991

Content: Groups of children explained how Hanukkah, Kwanza, and Christmas are traditionally celebrated. Some children explained how their families celebrate in their homes. They read poems and stories connected with these holidays and sang holiday songs.

Program Three: Theme: Colonial America

Length: 12 minutes

Date Aired: December 20, 1991

Content: After a field trip to Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Massachusetts the children wrote short scripts in the language of the times explaining about laws and punishment of the 1600's. They wrote about education and games children played in Colonial America and also read period "want ads" from a newspaper. They incorporated "Poems and Stories" as a regular part of their "Kid's Talk" programming.

Program Four: Theme: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Civil Rights

struggle

Length: 10 minutes 25 seconds

Date Aired: January 17, 1992

Content: Children took parts and read from a poem for choral speaking, "Freedom Days". They sang Civil Rights songs and explained the movement, giving a short history. Songs included "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around", "We Shall Overcome", and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic". The program also included original poems on the theme of Civil Rights and an interview of students in the class about Civil Rights and what it means to them.

Program Five: Theme: Wacky Stories, and an "Behind The Scenes"

Length: 14 minutes

Date Aired: February 14, 1992

Content: Children decided to write their own funny stories about parents, home, and themselves. They also interviewed classmates about how they prepare for taping "Kid's Talk", and the process involved in putting the programs together. The final segment included original stories and poems.

Program Six: Theme: Movie Reviews, and current events

Length: 13 minutes 42 seconds

Date Aired: March 13, 1992

Content: Groups of children (three to four) discussed movies they had seen, giving personal opinions of the characters and plots. Movies they reviewed included, Home Alone, Beauty and the Beast,

Father of the Bride, Robin Hood, Hook, and My Girl. The current events segment included reports students had research and written about subjects such as the effort to save the elephant population in South Africa, guns in schools, the presidential campaign, and renovation to a power plant. This program also contained the Poems and Stories segment and was the final production of "Kid's Talk".

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